Neither Here nor There: Exploring the Implications for Reconciliation of post-Nunavik Teachers' Nostalgic Memories: A Collaborative Self-Study

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Acknowledgments

Stories are an inseparable part of my life's journey. From the moment I was introduced to stories in my first grade sharing circle, they have become my life source. Stories allow me to discover, explore, think, feel and do. Stories tell but they also listen. I am deeply thankful for the generous gifts of story and I acknowledge the offerings of this journey.

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Abstract

My doctoral study began with my interest in discovering what influences from my past Nunavik teaching experience inform my present teaching practice in Southern Quebec. Despite the fact that many teachers who teach in Indigenous communities continue to be non-Indigenous, surprisingly, this question has not yet been addressed; most studies have focused on going there (viz., preparation), and not the return. However, it stands to reason that non-Indigenous teachers may be deeply impacted by their experiences in Indigenous communities, impacts that exert a profound influence on their practices after they return 'home' to teach in southern non-Indigenous public and private schools. To explore this complex question, the present study drew on a combination of Indigenous methodologies, collaborative self-study, memory work and poetic inquiry. The participants, including myself, examined our memories of teaching in Inuit villages as non-Inuit teachers performing research as ceremony (Wilson, 2008), a way of honouring the Indigenous peoples and voices who helped inform this study. In the process of 'settling' (viz,. acknowledging and then coming to terms with) and then unsettling our stories, we employed a recursive method, passing through second, third and fourth thoughts. We discovered how critical forms of nostalgia especially informed our teaching, as we worked to reconcile the past with the present (Boym, 2001; Pinar 2012). As a result of our transformative inquiry (Tanaka, 2016), we realized that among the most lasting of the impacts of our past Nunavik teaching experiences were our consistent incorporating of Indigenous perspectives into our curricula, whereby our classrooms also became the platforms for acting as Indigenous supporters. Methodologically, my study contributes in an original way to decolonizing forms of qualitative research. I created a methodological framework in the form of an *inukshuk*, and later igloo, which represent hybridizations of Western and Indigenous ways of knowing. These synergetic conceptualizations of the medicine wheel contribute to Indigenous studies within the context of ally scholarship, settler theory, and decolonizing research methods and methodologies. Before beginning this research, my participants and I had struggled with feelings of exile. This felt liminality weighed heavily on us in that we feel we do not completely belong neither here (in Southern Quebec) nor there (in Nunavik). Re-envisioning nostalgia through a *currere* lens helped bring out implications of our collective self and memory work for changing the prevailing colonial story to one that supports reconciliation, thus contributing to the growing body of work

in critical nostalgia. *Currere*, which involves examination of a person's accumulated body of knowledge, both academic and lived, allows for critical reflection of memories and in our case, moving from restorative to reflective nostalgia (Boym, 2001). This dissertation also contributes to literature on liminality and third spaces in the area of decolonizing teacher education, emphasizing collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers. Further questions arising from this study focus on non-Indigenous teacher education and preparation for teaching in Indigenous communities, considering the implications of the 'return' (to the South) post Indigenous teaching experiences. The recommendations suggested in this thesis are an effort to contribute to reconciliation for improved relations and equal opportunities that are inclusive, representative, respectful and reflective of Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures and languages in Canada, and all voices in-between.

Résumé

Ma recherche doctorale a été inspirée par mon intérêt à découvrir quelles influences de mon expérience d'enseignement au Nunavik passée forment ma pratique courante au sud du Québec. Malgré le fait que plusieurs professeurs qui enseignent au Nunavik continuent de parvenir d'origine non-autochtone, étonnamment cette question n'a pas encore été investiguée; la plupart des études se concentrent sur l'aller au Nunavik (en termes de préparation), et non sur le retour. Pourtant, il va de soi que les professeurs non-autochtones pourraient êtres fortement affectés par leurs expériences dans des communautés autochtones, des effets qui exercent une profonde influence sur les pratiques, suite au retour à l'enseignement « chez eux », dans des écoles publiques et privés non-autochtones. Pour explorer cette question complexe, l'étude a tiré sur une combinaison de méthodologies autochtones, travail de mémoire, étude de soi collaboratif, et enquête poétique. Les participants, moi-même incluse, ont examiné leurs souvenirs d'enseignement comme non-Inuits dans des villages inuits, en performant de la recherche comme cérémonie (Wilson, 2008), une façon de rendre honneur aux peuples et aux voix autochtones qui ont aidé à informer cette étude. Dans le processus de 'coloniser' (c'est-à-dire reconnaitre et accepter) et, par après, déstabiliser nos histoires de colonisateurs, nous avons utilisé une méthode récursive, passant par deuxième, troisième et quatrième pensées. Nous avons découvert comment des formes de nostalgie critiques ont particulièrement informé notre enseignement, et ce, pendant nos tentatives de réconcilier le passé avec le présent (Boym, 2001 ; Pinar, 2012). Comme résultat de notre enquête transformatrice (Tanaka, 2016), nous avons découvert que parmi les impacts les plus durables de nos expériences d'enseignement au Nunavik, étaient nos incorporations des perspectives autochtones dans nos programmes scolaires, par lesquelles nos salles de classe sont aussi devenues des plateformes pour se comporter comme des alliés autochtones. Méthodologiquement, mon étude contribue d'une façon originale aux formes décolonisatrices de recherche qualitative. J'ai créé un cadre méthodologique dans la forme d'un *inukshuk*, et plus tard d'un iglou, des représentations hybrides de manières de savoir occidentales et autochtones. Ces conceptualisations synergétiques du cercle d'influence contribuent aux études autochtones dans le contexte de littérature alliée, de théorie de colonisateur, et des méthodes et méthodologies décolonisatrices. Avant de commencer cette recherche, mes participants et moi avions lutté avec des sentiments d'exile. Cette liminalité

pesait durement sur nous, car nous nous sentions comme si nous n'appartenions pas complétement ici (au sud du Québec), ni là (au Nunavik). Repenser la nostalgie par le prisme de *currere*, a aidé à faire ressortir les implications de notre travail sur nos souvenirs et sur le soi collectif pour changer l'histoire coloniale dominante vers une qui soutient la réconciliation, et ce en contribuant au corps grandissant de la nostalgie critique. *Currere*, qui implique l'examen des savoirs cumulatifs d'une personne, académiques ainsi que vécus, permet la réflexion critique de nos souvenirs, et dans notre cas la mutation de nostalgie reconstituante en nostalgie réflective (Boym, 2001). Cette dissertation contribue aussi à la littérature sur la liminalité et troisièmes espaces dans le domaine de la pédagogie décolonisatrice, en soulignant la collaboration entre les professeurs autochtones et non-autochtones. Les révélations de cette recherche ont mis au jour de nombreuses autres questions liées à la formation des professeurs non-autochtones enseignant dans des communautés autochtones, en considérant les implications du retour (au sud) suite à leurs expériences d'enseignement autochtones. Les recommandations suggérées dans cette thèse sont un effort de contribuer à la réconciliation, aux relations améliorées et aux opportunités égales qui sont inclusives, représentatives, respectueuses, et réflectives des cultures et langues autochtones et non-autochtones au Canada, et toutes les voix entre les deux.

Chapter One – Carving a Path: Introduction

"If you find yourself on a path, then you must stay on it only if it has heart, and it is only your heart that can tell if it so." (Chambers, 2004, p.6)

Window Watching: A Greeting

Eight years ago today, I was home. At this very moment, I would be teaching my Secondary Cycle One and Two students English Language Arts and Social Studies, and we would be watching the snow fall through the big classroom windows. The bell would ring, and the students would slip into their snow pants and *parkas*, and pull on their *kamiks*, mitts, and *nasaks*. The sound of snowmobile engines would fill the air outside, leaving the air inside quiet and sad, now that the students were gone. There I would stand, by the big windows of my classroom, watching the snow fall into the bay and the children hurry home for lunch, the beauty of the snow-laden land disappearing far into the mountains.

Even though it has been eight years that I've returned from Nunavik, the arctic region of Quebec, I often wander off into my memories of that time and place. As I remember, I breathe in the cold, crisp air, and hear the sounds of children laughing, my heart filling with love. My memories unravel like a ribbon, revealing each detail one at a time, like flashes that burst and melt together into an infinite composition, as vast a canvas as the sky.

It is a lonely place to be, looking into the window of my past. Longing for the comforts of that peaceful scene in the window, nostalgia swells within me and makes my heart heavy with longing. I find myself daydreaming of my Northern experience, not only throughout the routine of everyday life in Montreal, but especially in my current Southern classroom. I cannot ignore how the memories of my Northern teaching experience make themselves present in my current practice. Their influences trickle in at times subtle, for instance, in building relationships with students, at other times rushing and flooding, when questioning the adequacy of the school system and its policies.

In my loneliness, I wonder if there are others like me. Are there other teachers returned from Nunavik who struggle with their 'post' identities? Are there others who find their teaching transformed by their Nunavik experiences? Is there a way to reconcile both our past and present identities in our current lives? How does this affect our teaching? How does it affect our

students? There are many questions that come to mind as I try to balance the pre-Nunavik, Nunavik, and post-Nunavik stages of my teaching and identity. It is the goal of my doctoral research to explore how post-Nunavik teachers reconcile the past with the present, and more specifically, how the various personal and professional impacts of our past Nunavik teaching experiences influence our current practices. The research question that first oriented my research became: How has the memory and experience of teaching in an Inuit community in Nunavik, Quebec, influenced and informed a teacher's practice once back in southern Quebec? Later, once I had designed my collaborative self-study (described shortly and in Chapter Three) the research question became: What are the influences and impacts of my participants' and my Northern teaching experiences on our current practices in Southern Quebec?

Situating the Research

I began my teaching career in a remote Inuit village with a population of less than four hundred. I was twenty-three years old and fresh out of University. Although the Inuit culture and people were foreign to me, as I immersed myself in their language and traditions, the adventure soon turned inwards. Upon return from Nunavik is when the questions began to fill my thoughts and to which I frequently return.

For teachers going North, the Inuit people we encounter are *others*. For the Inuit, however, the *others* are the *Qallunaat* (pronounced ha-loo-nat), the white teachers who travel to their communities. Understanding this dynamic is of utmost importance to my work. What we, *Qallunaat* teachers know about the Inuit is what we have learned in schools or seen in the media, through the hegemonic and often discriminatory lens of Western imperialism (Annahatak, 1998; Battiste & Barman, 1995; Smith; 1999, Watt-Cloutier; 2015). We travel to their land with the intent of teaching their children, as a result of colonialism's legacy (Annahatak, 1998; Battiste & Barman, 1995). Often, we do not receive sufficient preparation in Inuit language, culture or history to understand, much less impart knowledge to the children of this culture, nor are we equipped to cope with and address the negative effects of colonialism on their land and identities (Stairs, 1995; Taylor, 1995; Watt-Cloutier, 2015). We travel to their communities by plane, speaking different languages and wearing foreign clothing. We are the outsiders who do not understand them, but also, whom they do not understand (Watt-Cloutier, 2015).

The term *other* is widely used in academia to denote persons not belonging or pertaining to cultures other than those labelled as White, Western, or Eurocentric (Battiste 1995, Smith, 1999; Whitinui, 2013). The word *other*, then, denotes persons living in the margins of a globalized world, and comes with a myriad of negative connotations, specifically with regards to Indigenous populations. Similar to Watt (2012) writing about her work in Tehran, who describes entering the field with little to no previous knowledge about its inhabitants, I too journeyed to a land inhabited by a people of which I knew very little about. In line with Native researchers such as Smith (1999) and Whitinui (2013), Watt (2012) warns of the writing about and for rather than with and to the *other*. In order to decolonize our thinking we must revisit our relationships and encounters with *others* with deference; that is, if we claim to know or understand the *other* we are exercising our knowledge over that *other*; the *other* "becomes an object of my comprehension, my world, my narrative, reducing the Other to me" (p. 34). And so, in order to live, talk, understand, share and teach with others and *others*, we must first learn to see, hear, and feel as them, as making sense of one self occurs in the construction of the other (Watt, 2012; Whitinui, 2013).

This thesis is immersed in the language and traditions of Nunavik Inuit. As a non-Indigenous researcher, it is my duty to ensure that my research reaches the people who have helped inform this study (Smith, 1999; Whitinui, 2013). The methods of data collection and analysis honour the oral and story-telling traditions of Inuit culture and heritage. In an effort to present the data and findings respectfully, as well as to ensure that the research will reach back to the communities with which it is concerned, Inuktitut terminology is used throughout.

Sticks and Stones

I have always loved stories. From the time I was a little girl in elementary school, my first grade teacher, a woman whom I will never forget, introduced me to the story-telling world. My mother often tells me the story of how I would arrange my dolls and teddy bears in a circle and read them stories, showing them the pictures, holding the book high in the air and panning it for all my "students" to see. Imitating my teacher gave me such great joy; a feeling of love and care swept up inside me, just like the feelings of love and care my teacher expressed for me at school, a place that was usually unkind to me with bullies lurking behind every wall and in every corner.

Stories were my haven; the place where I could live and laugh and love without feeling guilty or ashamed. They were what kept me going; the place of magic and adventure, the place where dreams came true and wishes were granted. They gave me hope, motivation and inspiration, and before long, even though I could hardly hold a pencil, I was writing and creating stories of my own, stories that my teacher proudly "published" (using cardboard, tape and unused wall-paper samples) and read to the class in our story-sharing circle. My family and I frequently laugh at these memories of me reading to and "teaching" my toys, amazed at how what they thought was a simple childhood pass-time has turned into a life-long interest, passion and career.

Everything happens for a reason. Little did I know, that at the age of six years old, when I first discovered the power of stories, and the open dialogue that is created in the safe space of a story-sharing circle, that my heart had already begun its path. I am a first generation Canadian of European descent born and raised in Montreal. My parents immigrated to Canada from Portugal and Spain with their parents, with the hopes and dreams for a better life. My father arrived in Montreal in the 1960s at the age of nine, and my mother arrived at the age of fifteen in the 1970s. They met one Sunday afternoon in Mount-Royal Park, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Growing up, my life was very different from the other children at school. We lived in a suburb of Montreal, and as my parents were always working in order to provide for my older brother and I, they made the decision to enroll us at Bancroft Elementary School on St. Urbain street, as it was a two minute walking distance from my maternal grandmother's apartment. My father would drive us to school in the mornings, and after school, my brother and I would walk to my grandmother's house, where she had afterschool snacks, hugs and kisses waiting for us. As my brother is five years older than me, he was in grade six when I was in grade one, and so the only time we spent together was in the mornings and afterschool, as he made it clear that he was too cool to talk to me at school.

I already knew I was different. The other children would laugh at me because I did not belong. The bullies were mean and I was forced to face them alone. As I grew older and made friends, I was often left out of birthday parties, after-school activities and weekend trips to the cinema, since I did not live in Montreal and could not attend. This created a distance between me and the other children. As my brother went on to high school, I saw him even less, and the distance between him and I grew as well.

At home, I always felt alone. Growing up in a very strict environment, I was to be spending my time studying, or practicing the piano. I remember always feeling anxious at home. I would go to bed praying that the night would end quickly so that I could go back to school, where despite feeling like I didn't belong, I could at least immerse myself in stories. When I completed grade six my parents and I decided that I would attend high school closer to home.

I began high school with no friends, and the taunting and bullying grew worse. Still, I immersed myself in my books and schoolwork. I proceeded in this way to university, my parents having instilled the importance of an education and discipline in me from a very young age. In addition to a rigorous program of studying, piano practices were a minimum of one hour, nightly (and two as I grew older and the pieces more difficult), with the added pressures of conservatory exams looming at the end of every year. I used to enjoy playing the piano, as like stories, music allowed me to express myself and escape my pain, but as I grew older, I would be punished for any grade under ninety percent, both in school and piano. I did not want to be punished, so I studied and practiced for hours on end to ensure that I made the marks, but the joy soon began to trickle and fade away.

The one thing that never varied and was always constant was my love for stories, and as I entered McGill University at the age of eighteen, I enrolled in the Bachelor of Education program, specializing in secondary English Language Arts and Social Studies. I had always wanted to become a teacher, but my father had wanted me to pursue a career in law or medicine. Committing to my true love and passion, in order to share stories for a living, was the first active step that I took in my own journey of "becoming" (Pinar, 2015, p.119). It was a difficult step that came with a lot of backlash, but I somehow managed to convince my father that pursuing an education in a field that I didn't like or didn't feel comfortable in, would do more harm than good.

Once I began my courses in the Faculty of Education, my heart began to soar anew. It had always been my dream to become a teacher, ever since I first sat in the story-sharing circle of my grade one class. Not only did I feel happy and loved through stories, but it had become my goal to reach at least one student, as my first-grade teacher had done with me. After various interviews with different local and overseas schoolboards, I accepted my first job offer from the Nunavik school board. I was twenty-three years old and ready to begin my journey. I spent the summer reading about the town I had been assigned to and researching Nunavik Inuit customs

and traditions, between packing boxes and saying goodbyes, but I wanted more than anything to begin unpacking and say hello; to start my own life with the people I would encounter there.

A Complicated Conversation

When I first arrived in Nunavik, a young, naïve and inexperienced teacher, I thought that I was on a mission to change the world; I wanted to help make it a better place for children to live and learn (Desautels, 2009; Strong-Wilson, 2005). I wanted to offer love and education, and hoped to inspire my students to make healthy life choices. I realized, however, that my teaching in Nunavik was exactly the thing I was preaching against. Until writing my Master's thesis, I had not realized that I had gone to their land, as a *Qallunaak* of European descent, with a mindset of 'best intentions,' yet taught them in the language of the coloniser. I imposed Western, Eurocentric ideals on my students who were required to speak me in that language, just as their parents and grandparents had been obliged in residential schools (Desautels, 2009; Mueller, 2006; Strong-Wilson, 2005). This realization was quite a blow.

There were times that I felt, and that was one of them, like pressing the delete button. Like throwing my computer against the wall and letting it bang and fall into a million, shattered little pieces. But I collected my thoughts and centered my heart. I may have felt like a traitor, but in feeling like a traitor, I unsettled myself. I began to understand how difficult it was for one of my students, for example, a mere child, to tell his or her *Qallunaat* teacher in the language of the colonizer, in a language that she is still learning, that she hadn't completed her homework or that she came to school late because of some of the most harsh effects of the colonizing story (Mueller, 2006.)

Upon reflection I have also come to realize that my memories of Nunavik, or rather, the way I have constructed the memories of my experiences in Nunavik, deal largely with a longing for an idyllic past, one of deep familial-like bonds with my colleagues and students. As Strong-Wilson, Mitchell, Allnutt, and Pithouse-Morgan (2013) write, "future remembrance is often centred around nostalgia – the idea that a return to an idealized past is required in order to have a future" (p. 5). I have discovered that in writing about my experiences of living and teaching in Nunavik, I attempt to recreate those experiences in the present. My nostalgia is based on a feeling of loss; one that idealizes a bond with the landscape and the people of Nunavik; bonds that become projected and re-instated in my writing (Strong-Wilson et al, 2013). My nostalgia is

expressed as a world of inner-peace that only my memories of Nunavik can offer me; a world of profound personal relationships with people and nature; a world not available to me in the South.

This longing for Nunavik began to occur in the year of my return to the South: the exact time that I began writing my Master's thesis. This longing – and the writing of it – is therefore in tune with "belatedness", the notion that a break from isolation of the event is necessary in order for it to be carried forward (Strong-Wilson et al, 2013, p.7). I have created a "post-memory not through recollection but through 'imaginative investment and creation'" one that is animated by a "deep personal connection", but in such a way that interposes a critical distance (Strong-Wilson et al, 2013 p.12). Without the lapse in time and relocation to the South, there would have been no room for critical reflection on my unsettling experience as a White teacher travelling North (Regan, 2010). There would have been no room for my mind and heart to begin to interpret my own thoughts and feelings about my experiences as a settler, and no room to question them.

Story-Sharing Circles

The sharing of my memories in my master's and doctoral theses, like Fowler (2002) who also writes with respect to her own teacher story, seemed to flow out of me: "stories began to tumble out of my pen before I was aware of what was happening and what might lie beneath the surface" (Fowler, 2002, p. 6). The more I reflect on my own use of words and language, the more I feel betrayed by myself. Some of the word choices in my writing are reminiscent of a colonial perspective with which I am extremely uncomfortable. From this point of view, my use of language may not be seen as an honouring or out of respect or deference to Indigenous cultures as I intend them to be, but more like a borrowing of a language that is not mine to use, or a romanticized perception of what a white colonizer holds of the mystical *other*. Although this is not my intention at all, I cannot dismiss the possibility that in my location as a *Qallunak*, I risk being misinterpreted through my word choices and use of language. I would like to extend my apologies. I have been watching and questioning the use of my words and language, and over-identification with Inuit customs and beliefs. I welcome every opportunity to learn from my mistakes as I continue to critically self-reflect on and beyond my doctoral journey (Tuck and Yang, 2012).

My personal connection to story-telling has greatly influenced the writing of my thesis. Telling my story has also transformed the memory of my experiences in Nunavik. Looking back at how I had constructed my memories and stories, I am amazed at the knowledge I discovered about how deeply nostalgia continues to affect my memories of Nunavik in my mind and heart. Upon reflection I have asked myself various questions about my writing: "What is powerful? What is omitted? What doesn't fit? Which clichés "gloss over" experiences?" (Wilson, 2002). What is hiding in the spaces between? What voices are silent? What dwells in the shadows, gaps, and spaces, and how can I bring them to light? I had to move to Nunavik in order to find myself, but when I moved back to Montreal, these difficult questions of language and location disturb and unsettle my settler consciousness. These feelings and perceptions are actually a representation of my present struggles, a feeling aligned with exile (Wilson, 2002). As a result of my experiences living and teaching in the North, I feel like an "exile from my own culture" (Wilson, 2002, p. 76). This forces me to ask the question: "is the relocating to there about hiding from here?" (Wilson, 2002, p.80) It is clear that this feeling of exile was one of the reasons why I moved North: to find myself and to become me; however, it is even clearer still, that after having moved back South, a part of me still remains and will forever live in the North. The journey, the sense of exile, the isolation and the dissatisfaction with my own culture, the feeling of not wholly belonging, neither here nor there, is one that I believe I may continue to struggle with my entire life.

I stated earlier that I had found myself in the North, that I was able to break free from the entrapment I felt living in Montreal with its constant stresses and obligations. In the North, I was able to learn who I really was, to do what I wanted to do, and that time did not matter. Furthermore, moving North provided freedom; personal and financial, but also a freedom from my traumatic past. By writing my memories of the North as a landscape of pure white and of infinite blue sky, I constructed a place where I could run far away from painful memories to replace them with infinite opportunities for happiness. The way I have described the vastness of the land, its emphasis on a pure, white, snow-filled territory unharmed by pollution and accompanied by endless horizons, are symbols of the freedom I always longed to have, a freedom that stands in stark contrast to the dark memories by which I feel trapped and tormented. But they are also disturbing and damaging uses of colonizing language, and as such, I pay careful attention throughout this thesis, to unsettle my language, location, memories, stories and

experiences, in an effort to re-write my own settler story within the context of reconciliation. As Chambers (2004) writes,

> I have also found that what matters hides in improbable places such as dreams, just beneath the surface of a story or a lie or memory; and what matters springs up in the middle of the contradiction between what I say and what I do. (p. 8)

The influence of my nostalgia was presenting itself in many aspects of my life. When beginning my Master's degree upon return from Nunavik, the more I thought about my experience, the more I felt like I did not belong here or there. My feelings seemed to intensify when writing, and upon completion of my thesis, I began to question whether I was the only teacher who had returned from Nunavik that was struggling with those feelings of loss, loneliness and exile. It seemed possible to me that if I was experiencing such a felt nostalgia, there could be other returned teachers that were experiencing it as well. In seeking out the experiences of other teachers like myself, I believed that we would be able to discover together what influences and impacts from our past Nunavik experiences are present in our current Southern Quebec practices through collaborative self-study.

As Tanaka (2016) writes,

> we express ourselves through stories, and we listen to the stories of others to find out who they are. We reflexively examine our life stories to better know ourselves, to figure out how the world works, and to find our place within a complex web of relationships. We give voice to where we are located, and where we are going, through the telling of our stories. (pp. 13-14)

The participants and I told stories of our experiences in Nunavik, in a circle. Akin to an Indigenous story-sharing circle, we visited with each other making new meaning from the symbols, language and location that was hiding in the stories, and examined them from two sets of eyes, as settlers, but also as *others* who do not belong either here or there (Archibald, 1990). As Tanaka (2016) writes, "each of us has to be open to learn about others without prejudice and with trust in a mutual intent to do no harm. It is a task that is best done communally" (p. 69). By sharing our stories together, we questioned and called each other into doubt, in order to "see the story and its meaning again and anew, with each revision" (Chambers, 2004, p. 12).

In telling and listening to our stories in a circle, we adhered to the seven principles of story-telling related to using Indigenous stories for educational purposes, what Archibald (2008)

terms “storywork: respect, responsibility, reciprocity, reverence, holism, inter-relatedness, and synergy” (p. ix). According to Archibald (2008), each person who shares stories in “this circle of learning assumes a responsibility to either listen, to share, to teach, or to learn” (p. 63). Throughout the inquiry, the participants and I shared, listened, were taught, and learned, from each other and from the past, into the present towards the future. With each new telling of our stories, we took accountability and responsibility to ensure that these stories are shared in the appropriate context. As Wilson (2008) writes,

> In receiving the story, you as an active listener are responsible for putting the story into a relational context that makes sense for you and for your listening with an open heart and open mind. If you choose to pass along the story or my words, you also take on the responsibilities of the storyteller yourself. The relationships that we all build with an Indigenous research paradigm shape and redefine the concept. In your joint ownership of this concept, you are also accountable for how you use it. (pp. 126-127)

In so doing, we found the “potency” of each story for ourselves and for each other, and its “power to transform” the teller and the listener” (Chambers, 2004, p. 12).

The Problem of Representation

This thesis is based on the memories and experiences of four *Qallunaat* teachers that lived and were immersed in an isolated Nunavik Inuit community for a number of years (between two and six) as *other*, and who have since returned ‘home’ to teach in southern Quebec. This thesis is written from a dichotomous viewpoint, as since we have returned ‘home’, we long for our home in Nunavik; and the Northern family we created there with our colleagues and students. In *Coyote’s Story About Orality and Literacy,* Archibald (1990) discusses the story of Coyote and his two different eyes (one of a mouse and one of a buffalo), a metaphor for Indigenous authors who have two eyes: one Indigenous and one White. For Coyote, having two different eyes means “learn[ing] the function or worldview of each eye [so] he can focus the appropriate one for whatever situation he finds himself in” (p. 78). Like Coyote, the participants and I view the world from two perspectives: one as a settler, and one as other to oneself, having been influenced and impacted by Inuit people and way of life:

> the dichotomy is never erased because there are characteristics which cannot be removed from each world. In fact, this analogy depicts the situation between First Nations and

> mainstream society. This pathway most importantly does not imply that one world is ultimately better than the other; it merely depicts reality. (p. 78)

Thus, having two eyes and ears allows us to understand, speak and listen from both sides of our story, offering insights from two perspectives. With our settler eye, we speak from our experiences as *Qallunaat* gone North; as members of mainstream society; as ancestors of colonizers. With our eye other to oneself, created by the influence and impact of having lived and taught in Nunavik, we speak from our experiences of having been immersed in Inuit language and culture; we speak as supporters.

Lincoln and Denzin (2000) ask: "can we ever hope to speak authentically of the experience of the Other, or an Other?" (p.1050) Lincoln and Denzin's (2000) discussion of qualitative research emphasizes that one's writing, autobiographical or not, is a statement of politics and that one must merge politics with collaborative and participatory scholarship (p. 1051). At this point I must make it clear that every Indigenous text, song, artistic performance and film that I have come across in this research and writing process has served as influence but also as a guideline for the representing the Indigenous voices included in the participants' and my stories, memories and experiences. I would also like to point out that it is indeed difficult to find scholarship written by Inuit on Inuit culture and traditions. I am therefore widely indebted and must specifically acknowledge, along with all the other Indigenous authors who have influenced and informed my study, Betsy Annahatak, Sylvie Watt-Cloutier, and Hannah Tooktoo. Their work and words have inspired and informed my research so deeply, that I offer them my greatest thanks. *Nakurmik marialuk.*

Lincoln and Denzin (2000) state that that there can be no autobiographical writing that is an "objective, dispassionate, value-neutral account of a culture and its ways" and that like art, it "speaks to and for its historical moment as a political reflection" (p. 1054). Reminiscent of Alcoff's (1991) fourth point of advice in speaking with others, looking at "where the speech goes and what it does there" my thesis is subjective according to my participants' and my interpretations of the Inuit world, but also to our interpretations of the *Qallunaat* world (p.23-24). Again, I encounter the problem of representation. Lincoln and Denzin's (2000) solution is that we have "lived close enough to [the Inuit] to begin to understand how they constructed their worlds" and writing partly from a *Qallunaat* and partly from an Indigenous supporter perspective, while highlighting the Inuit storytelling tradition, "leaves traditions of Western

ethnography unsettled" (p. 1058). This thesis explores, discusses and reflects on Inuit and *Qallunaat* relations in such a way that it re-stories history and tells the story of human experience and community in that it "moves from the researcher's biography to the biographies of others, to those rare moments when our lives connect" (Lincoln & Denzin, 2000, p. 1054). With our two eyes, settler and Indigenous supporter – informed by our experiences in Nunavik, the participants and I communicated through and with both views. From this dichotomous viewpoint, breaking down language and cultural barriers allowed for a coming together of both worlds.

Arts-Based Research

I do not see myself as an authority, but I feel my time in Nunavik has accorded me an abundance of experiential knowledge that I would like to share with my *Qallunaat* counterparts. My thesis will portray what it feels like to be a *Qallunaat* living in an Inuit community, but also what it feels like for us as *others* post-Nunavik, and how the lessons we learned there are present here, now, and continue into the future. This thesis can be used as a curriculum and professional development resource, as it provides insights for *Qallunaat* teachers presently teaching or thinking of teaching in Inuit communities, and for *Qallunaat* teachers who will continue to teach post-Nunavik. But more than anything, this thesis is meant to make readers *feel* as Barone and Eisner (2012) write, because "such empathy is a necessary condition for deep forms of meaning in human life. The arts make such empathic participation possible because they create forms that are evocative and compelling (p. 3). It is for these reasons, as well as to honour the oral tradition of Inuit story-telling, that I chose to incorporate story-sharing and poetic inquiry in my research study.

As Dobson (2010) wrote, "life without poetry is unimaginable. Imagery is to poetry what fact is to prose. Hard, cold facts are necessary, but without imagination, life would be unthinkable" (p. 131). In fact, as Indigenous researcher Shawn Wilson (2008) quoting Eber Hampton writes,

> emotionless, passionless, abstract, intellectual, academic research is a … lie. It does not exist. It is a lie to ourselves and a lie to other people. Humans – living, breathing, thinking humans – do research. When we try to cut ourselves off…and pretend an objectivity that does not exist in the human world, we become dangerous, to ourselves first, and then to the people around us. (pp. 100-101)

Thus, I believe examining the memories and stories of my participants' and my experiences in Nunavik through poetry "serves as a vital medium for self-study because the poetic expression requires a different orientation of thought than most of us … have been used to" (Dobson, 2010, p. 132). According to Strong et al (2014), teachers need to undertake memory work and self-study in order to acknowledge their learning and confront the stories they find in their memories and experiences. This process of 'bringing memory forward' involves going back in place and time, to discover and illuminate old experiences and stories and transform them into new experiences and stories for the present into the future (Pinar, 2012; Strong et al, 2014). Through memory work and self-study, the participants and I wrote stories of our past and used poetic inquiry to confront ourselves and illuminate what was hiding between our words, our worlds, and ourselves; our past, present and future, and all the spaces in between (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2009; Grumet, 1981; Pierce, 2007; Pinar, 2012; Strong-Wilson, 2005).

Reminiscent of Smith's (1999) notions of respectful and ethical research with Indigenous communities, an arts-based methodology that fuses Indigenous methodologies, memory work, self-study and poetic inquiry allowed the participants and I to express our findings in a way that is more attuned with the Inuit story-telling tradition: a tradition that allows for feeling in order to gain understanding, and understanding to gain knowledge. Thus, my study, which has been researched and presented through Indigenous and arts-based methodologies,

> with its main goals of accessibility (and breadth of audience), is an attempt to acknowledge individuals in societies as knowledge makers engaged in the act of knowledge advancement. Tied to moral purpose, it is also an explicit attempt to make a difference through research, not only in the lives of ordinary citizens, but also in the thinking and decisions of policymakers, politicians, legislators, and other key decision makers. (Cole & Knowles, p. 60)

Thesis Organization

In writing this thesis, I am well aware of my location as a non-Indigenous Canadian of European descent. While I tell the stories of fellow *Qallunaat* teachers, which include our past Inuit students and colleagues, readers may question if I am appropriately telling the stories of others (Tanaka, 2016). While this study is informed by our past Inuit students and colleagues, and various Indigenous authors and scholars, I must emphasize that this study is mainly

concerned with *Qallunaat* teachers (Regan, 2010). In unsettling our settler stories, we re-storied our past, present and future, and it is from this lens that I share not the stories of my past Inuit students and colleagues, as they are not mine to tell, but those of my *Qallunaat* participants in an effort to bridge the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples towards reconciliation (Regan, 2010). My intention, as Wilson (2008) writes, is "to build a relationship between the readers of this [thesis], myself as the storyteller, and the ideas I present" (p. 6). As such, I began in this introductory chapter, by discussing my interest and participation in Indigenous research and methodologies, and the reasons why they are personally and professionally significant to me. In narrating my settler story, I illustrated how the legacy of colonialism is present in my life and work. In my efforts to decolonize curricula and pedagogy, I attempt to disrupt the status quo, with the goal of contributing to the reconstruction of society towards reconciliation (Grumet, 1981; Pinar, 2012; Regan, 2010). In these ways, I attempt to build a relationship with my readers "in order for an understanding of an Indigenous research paradigm to develop" (Wilson, 2008, p. 6).

The second and third chapters describe the theoretical perspectives (Chapter Two – Pillars and Anchors: Theoretical Considerations), and methodological approaches, (Chapter Three – Brick by Brick: Constructing a Methodology) which have informed this study in an attempt to reach towards and answer to the research question. In Chapter Two I discuss how memory studies, liminal/third spaces, nomadic literature, settler theory, curriculum theory and Indigenous counter stories provide a lens for understanding and interpreting how the influences and impacts of teachers' past Nunavik experiences affect their current practices. In the third chapter, I present how methodological approaches in Indigenous research, memory work, self-study and poetic inquiry helped the participants and I discover how our past Nunavik influences appear in our current southern Quebec practices, and how they may impact us into the future.

In Chapter Four – Walking the Path: Concrete Plans, I detail the blueprint I designed for the collection and interpretation of data, and in Chapter Five – Stepping Stones: The Collection of Data, I recall the inquiry process, describing the various steps the participants and I took, including the writing of stories and poems. In Chapter Six – No Stone Unturned: Analysis, I provide a detailed account of how the data was analyzed and present the first round of findings from the inquiry. In Chapter Seven – Touchstones and Poetry: Results Year Two, I present a second set of results after an additional year of critical reflection on the previous year's findings,

and highlight new findings, outcomes, and suggested recommendations for further research and improvement in the areas of education policy and social justice. Finally, in Chapter Eight – Skipping Stones: A Living Conclusion, I offer a response to the research question, as well as discuss the limitations and contributions of this study, and suggest ideas for future research. In Chapter Nine – Creating Ripples/Afterword: Beyond the Study, I reveal the personal and professional ways in which I have changed and grown from the past into the present and future, as a result of having undertaken this research.

Chapter Two – Pillars and Anchors: Theoretical Considerations

"I look back with a mix of emotions: sadness for the people who are gone, nostalgia for times that have passed, but immense gratitude for the wonderful opportunities that came my way." – Dick Van Patten

"In personal life, the warm glow of nostalgia amplifies good memories and minimizes bad ones about experiences and relationships, encouraging us to revisit and renew our ties with friends and family. It always involves a little harmless self-deception, like forgetting the pain of childbirth." – Stephanie Coontz

"We recognise that, with time, every human being will cease being, will only have been. And so we seek to resist time. We rebel against it. We are drawn like lovers to the unreachable past, to imagined memories, to nostalgia." – Mohsin Hamid

Memories of Nunavik

Teaching and living in a remote, isolated Inuit community in Nunavik has offered me many wonderful life and learning experiences. I always say that even though I went there to teach, I ended up learning so much more. Being a city dweller, Nunavik's beautiful mountains and the wildlife that inhabits them allowed me to get in touch with nature and thus with myself. I developed a patience, an inner peace, a respect for the land so great that I could spend hours by myself, just listening to the bell-like sound the waves make when they hit the ice-bergs in the thawing bay; hours lying in the middle of a frozen lake, feeling the sun's rays warm and tickle my face as I looked out into the great vastness ahead of me.

In the city we are always rushing, working, running here and there, but in Nunavik I took the time to experience every breath, and the calm changed me; it found me, and then I found myself. Although sometimes I would get homesick and miss my family and the comforts and distractions of city life, my students and colleagues became my new family; my Northern family. We lived life, with ups and downs, fun and sad times, and although we were very far from home, we were home.

Some of my favourite memories from Nunavik are captured in the novel I wrote as my Master's thesis once I had returned to Montreal. I often have recurring dreams about my time in Nunavik. My nostalgic memories and their imaginative recreations allow me to visit my Northern family and home from the South. Travelling back in time through my memories and

dreams, I re-experience those feelings that I mourn and long to re-live. In this chapter I present the theoretical notions considered in an attempt to reach towards the research question, namely: nomadic literature, memory studies, liminal spaces, curriculum theory, settler theory, and counter-stories, especially by Indigenous authors.

Teaching and Learning as the *Other*

We are citizens of the same country, but we are worlds apart. Our histories, although intertwining, tell two very different stories: one of assimilation and dominance, juxtaposed with one of subjugation and discrimination. This "competitive memory" on the one hand, does not allow *Qallunaat* to understand the spiritual Indigenous beliefs that bring Inuit communities together, and on the other hand, does not allow the Inuit to understand the technological advances and educational aspirations of the *Qallunaat* who attempt to instill these practices in their children (Rothberg, 2009, p. 3). According to Rothberg (2009), this harsh binary in our collective history does not allow all perspectives to be seen, as it pits one story against the other. The *Qallunaat* teachers who enter the Inuit world – often with little or no knowledge of it – assimilate their children (Battiste & Barman, 1995; Annahatak, 1998). Aware of it or not, these *Qallunaat* teachers place utmost importance on achieving a secondary school diploma: a benchmark for becoming a productive member of Canadian society and economy – a goal which takes no consideration of the Inuit reality (Levitt, 1995; Taylor, 1995; Stairs, 1995). Inuit students, then, are seen by *Qallunaat* teachers as the *others* who need to be learned in the ways of the Canadian collective, whereas *Qallunaat* teachers are seen by Inuit students as *others* who do not understand, and who sadly, many times, do not care (Annahatak, 1998; Hampton, 1995; Stairs, 1995).

This complicated relationship of *otherness* experienced by *Qallunaat* teachers and the Inuit people, especially Inuit students, is one that I explored in great detail in the novel that I wrote for my Master's thesis. The various different forms of *otherness* felt by Inuit students as well as Inuit and *Qallunaat* teachers is a subject which has been undertaken by previous teachers and scholars who had gone North before me, and who have informed my research for my Master's, and now for my PhD.

Mueller's (2006) and Desautels' (2009) theses, for example, highlight the many questions and feelings that *Qallunaat* teachers feel during their Northern teaching experiences, especially

the difficulties that arise in feeling like the outsider. One teacher notes that however hard one tries to fit in, and believes that they have finally become a part of the community, there is always an incident in which one is reminded how much we are in fact not a member of the community, and feels that the Inuit community is impenetrable for *Qallunaat* (Mueller, 2006). The teachers in both studies, as well as in Harper's (2000) article about non-Indigenous teachers in remote Northern Ontario communities, and Plourde's (2008) book about her teaching experiences in Nunavik, also relate how *Qallunaat* struggle to find their place in the Inuit world, and how many resort to isolation as a consequence. In my own experience, I can vividly remember Saturday night potlucks with *Qallunaat* colleagues always coming around to the subject of our students and our challenges with them, which mainly revolved around misunderstandings in language and culture. We often wondered how we could become closer to our students, their parents, and the community, in order to be better able to teach them. Not once did we question how we could learn from them.

Nomadic Literature, Teacher Identity, and Reverse Culture Shock

Much has been written on the subject of biculturalism in the classroom, and on the context of *otherness* as it applies to teachers travelling abroad. Ferguson (2011), Callendar (2003), and Arora (2013), for example, all recount the culture shock they experienced when first arriving to the foreign destinations in which they would teach. Whether in Thailand, Japan, or the Caribbean, these *Qallunaat* teachers were removed from the comfort of their usual lives in Canada, and required to adapt to foreign languages, lifestyles and cultures. The concept of the modern nomad, explored by Arora (2013), emphasizes how the travelling teacher experiences culture shock but then adapts to it in order to survive. This is ironic, as the Inuit were among the first Nomadic peoples who also learned to adapt in order to survive, and who continue to do so in in the face of globalization (Watt-Cloutier, 2015). Despite the influences of the *Qallunaat* world in which they live, the Inuit people's strong sense of pride and identity, as well as their respect for the land, have allowed their culture and traditions to endure a number of possible 'white-outs' throughout the centuries (Watt-Cloutier, 2015). Their determination in remaining true to their roots, despite very difficult struggles of *Qallunaat* dominance including cultural erasure in many forms, the most notable being the Residential School era, their voices speak loudly against the pages of textbooks which attempt to silence their stories by not telling them (Annahatak, 1998;

Hampton, 1995; Watt-Cloutier, 2015). In spite of this silent genocide, when *Qallunaat* teachers travel to Nunavik, they are transported not only to a land, but to a time where sharing, nature, story-telling and respect of elders are quintessential to life (Annahatak, 1998; Hampton, 1995; Watt-Cloutier, 2015). Rather than teachers going to teach, as Mueller (2006), Desautels (2009), and Plourde (2008) relate, teachers instead learn. While the first few days are filled with instances of culture shock, by the end of the first month, *Qallunaat* teachers begin to adapt to the Inuit way of life (Callendar, 2013; Desautels, 2009; Ferguson, 2011; Mueller, 2006; Plourde, 2008). They start to shed their old customs of city living, and learn to adopt a more relaxed attitude, a diet rich in country foods such as caribou and arctic char, a lifestyle embedded in Inuit outdoor activities such as berry picking and hikes in the tundra, and teaching lessons unpressured by the stresses of Southern schoolboard policies (Callendar, 2013; Desautels, 2009; Ferguson, 2011; Mueller, 2006; Plourde, 2008).

While a minor percentage of *Qallunaat* seem incapable of adapting to the slower-paced lifestyle and return to the South in the first three months, those that remain generally become fully involved in the Inuit communities, eager to learn the ways of their hosts (Callendar, 2013; Desautels, 2009; Ferguson, 2011; Mueller, 2006; Plourde, 2008). After having lived in the communities for some time – myself for four years – *Qallunaat* teachers in Nunavik feel a sense of belonging and camaraderie, one that allows them to feel as insiders in an *other* world, with the experience of being an outsider in that same world. It is a complicated relationship with so many idiosyncrasies, that only other *Qallunaat* teachers can understand.

According to Arora (2013), the modern nomad, the wanderer, the migrant worker, just to name a few synonyms, is usually one of the privileged Western world who can choose to pick up and go at his/her own volition. In this case the *Qallunaat* teacher fits Arora's (2013) description of a travelling professional rather than the more primitive notion that is normally associated with the term nomad. In this context, nomad suggests:

> restlessness and displacement without any particular geographic space to call home. Our Western perceptions include the imagery of lost peoples without a destination or goal. While it is estimated that between 50,000 and 100,000 individuals around the world lead nomadic ways of life (such as the Roma in Europe), the term nomad has been used pejoratively with colonized peoples. More recently and interestingly, the term also has been used to describe the transient and protean careers of highly mobile professionals.

> Ironically, nomads continue to be represented as placeless, inferior, and as the primitive "other" in today's globalizing world of mobility. (p. 194)

As Arora (2013) points out, I am reminded how the terms "nomad" and "other" can be used interchangeably when speaking of *Qallunaat* teachers who travel to Nunavik communities, and the Inuit students and community members whom they encounter. In the multi-textured relationships of insider and outsider, the *Qallunaat* teacher must consistently construct his/her own identity amidst changing values, much like the Inuit have done throughout history (Arora, 2013). *Qallunaat* teachers, however, do not merely intercept the Inuit world; they actively become a part of it and in doing so, feel no longer entirely as travellers, but as more native, despite their *otherness*. This complicated and conflicting identity is one which makes *Qallunaat* teachers feel like they belong neither here in the South, nor there in the North, and therefore struggle in reconciling the two places they call 'home' (Strong-Wilson, 2005).

Upon returning to the South, *Qallunaat* teachers often experience reverse culture shock, in which they realize how much their identities have been transformed by their Northern experience, and how much their identities are in exile (Ferguson, 2011; Strong-Wilson, 2005). According to Callendar (2003) and Ferguson (2011), cultural adjustment is the process that the *Qallunaat* teachers undergo during their immediate entry in an Inuit community. Isolation, displacement, depression, homesickness, anxiety, fear, and frustration are all common feelings for newly arrived *Qallunaat* (Callendar, 2003). Like Ferguson (2011) in Thailand, Callendar (2003) being removed from her comfortable surroundings in Canada, found it difficult at first to adjust, but ultimately adapted and enjoyed adopting a Japanese lifestyle. Once she returned to Canada, however, she found that readjusting to "home" was much more difficult:

> I was faced with a new, reverse culture shock, which forced me to readjust my thinking of home. As with my challenges of culture shock, my former familiarity with speaking French, eating cereal for breakfast and shaking hands with new people (instead of bowing) suddenly became difficult for me to remember. Not only did I question what Canadians did, but I also found myself bothered by their inability to see how the Japanese way was more efficient. (pp. 6-7)

Reading this struck a chord with me, as I can completely understand Callendar's (2003) uneasiness and even frustration with Canadian society. I still catch myself wanting to wave to a stranger on the street, as the Inuit custom is to wave to whomever you pass. The problem that

Callendar (2003) and *Qallunaat* like myself encounter, then, is not so much with our cultures as Callendar (2003) states, but more so with our identities, or rather, the struggle with our identities that nostalgia and memories of our adopted homes create.

As Harper (2000) suggests, it would seem that no amount of knowledge, skills or training could help you prepare for teaching in an Inuit community. "The learning process begins once you have left your comfort zone and moved to unfamiliar territory with different cultural, socio-economic and political standards" (Callendar, 2003, p. 18). Research indicates that readjusting back home, or reverse culture shock, is even more difficult than the adjustment to a new country, language, culture and people (Callendar, 2003; Ferguson, 2011).

According to Callendar (2003), reverse culture shock occurs when "returnees begin to realize how their experience abroad sets them apart from their compatriots at home. Some returnees begin to doubt their reasons for returning home and become overwhelmed by their situation" (p. 25). I can vouch for this statement personally, and even add that I often think how much easier life would be if I just packed up and left to go back up North. It is a regular occurrence for me to look at job postings with the Nunavik school board and try to convince my husband how much simpler our lives would be up North, away from stresses of jobs, family, finance, traffic, and the pressures of conforming to society. During my continuing readjustment, I, as other returnees, have also withdrawn from family and friends and experienced a type of loss and mourning accompanied by emotional and psychological difficulties (Callendar, 2003). Furthermore, as for Callendar (2003), reverse culture shock has left me with a myriad of questions about the meaning of home, culture and identity that I continue to struggle to find answers to on a daily basis.

Nostalgia and Memory Work

My memories and longing for the North are at the forefront of my struggle with "feeling home" at home. Nostalgia plays a big role, as I am constantly looking out the present window into the past, longing to find those idyllic scenes of the past become reality in the present. According to Atia and Davies (2010), this is when nostalgia could become dangerous, as "to give ourselves up to longing for a different time or place, no matter how admirable its qualities, is always to run the risk of constricting our ability to act in the present" (p. 181).

In the introduction to her book *The Right to be Cold*, Sheila Watt-Cloutier (2015), a respected Inuit activist, politician and writer, tells stories of her childhood, rich in the culture and history of her people and land, in an attempt to raise awareness about the global climate epidemic. I was moved to tears while reading a passage in her introduction which resonates loudly with me, in which she describes the tundra not as a frozen and barren wasteland, but a territory teeming with life and warmth (Watt-Cloutier, 2015 p. xv). Watt-Cloutier (2015) relates how each time she flies home from far-flung places, she cannot help but smile as a small northern community appears in the ice-framed window of her plane seat. I, too, sit here with a wide smile on my face, and a sense of inner peace and calm, just imagining the scene. As Watt-Cloutier (2015) lovingly recounts her memories and feelings of her home, land, and culture, I cannot help but feel aligned with her in wanting to save the Arctic from global warming. As she states, "the Arctic is much more than polar bears and seals" and she hopes that her book helps to "correct the preconceived notions of the Arctic and Inuit that many people hold" (Watt-Cloutier, 2015, p. xv).

According to Strong-Wilson et al (2014), a touchstone is a place in our memory that is frequently revisited. For Watt-Cloutier (2015) and myself, visons of idyllic Northern moments seen through a window allow for the tapping into a nostalgia that allows us to ground ourselves in Inuit identities and convictions. These touchstones, unlike the restorative nostalgia that Boym (2001) discusses, serve a larger purpose than expressing the emotional feelings of attachment and loss, but are deeply aligned with reflective nostalgia which leads to teacher self-awareness, and ultimately, learning, as it opens ourselves to the listening of multiple voices (Boym, 2001; Strong et al, 2014). According to Boym (2001), whereas restorative nostalgia is an attempt to recreate some form of the past in the present, reflective nostalgia allows for a critical understanding of how the past affects the present and future.

Liminal Spaces and The Problem of Home

As discussed earlier, *Qallunaat* returnees find themselves feeling neither here nor there, North or South, completely Inuit or completely *Qallunaat*, but in a space that is in between (Cook & Sather, 2011; La Shure, 2005; Pierce, 2007). Anthropologist Victor Turner coined the term liminality to define the space of *otherness* that one feels in comparison to marginalism and being an outsider (Cook & Sather, 2011; La Shure, 2005; Pierce, 2007). The *Qallunaat* returnee

is not a marginalized Canadian, nor an outsider, but rather an amalgam of two social groups: a marginalized Inuit and (prior to the Northern experience), a full-fledged Western (La Shure, 2005). As La Shure (2005) says of her experience in Korea:

> When I first came to Korea, I was indeed a marginal. I was marginalized by my ignorance of the Korean culture and language; in other words, I could not communicate with Koreans either culturally (that is, cultural differences prevented mutual understanding) or linguistically. As I became more familiar with both the culture and language, though, I moved into a liminal position. I am now part of Korean society to some extent, no longer fully liminal, but I will never be fully assimilated. I could return to my native land and be readily accepted there, but I doubt if I could ever fully accept my native land like I did before I left. I am betwixt and between. (para. 28)

La Shure (2005) and I share many affinities involved in being liminal. We live in an ambiguous place, one in which neither time nor place can change, but that affects our understanding and interpretation of our identities in this space between. Very often I find myself speaking Inuktitut words to my Southern students, because they have become such a huge part of my identity as a teacher. I cannot separate this Inuit vocabulary from my teaching – a side effect which leaves both me and my Southern students feeling awkward and stunned. The liminality I feel exists in all aspects of my life and identity in both personal and professional situations. Whether I am reminiscing about a "real blizzard" compared to snow storms in Montreal, a slip of language in the classroom, or a profound sociological conversation with colleagues, I find myself feeling marginal as an advocate for Inuit culture, but also marginal in the eyes of the Inuit, as a *Qallunaat* who does not understand, and who only furthers the legacy of colonialism. Being trapped in this in between state is frustrating and emotionally exhausting. The pain of not being able to communicate, share, listen and discuss these feelings with other "liminals" is overwhelming. Cook and Sather (2011) note that "those in a liminal state are never secure: their position is never fixed but instead constantly shifting and vulnerable" (p.3). There is a power to being liminal, however, as we have the "potential to challenge and disrupt established norms" (Cook & Sather, 2011, p. 3). While this can seem dangerous and threatening, I believe that for returning *Qallunaat*, it is an opportunity to contribute to the improvement of educational policies in the North and South.

As Pierce (2007) writes, beginning teachers are reluctant to discuss questions or concerns in their new schools and professions, and "struggle desperately as they attempt to grapple with the complexities and contradictions of teaching and their own personal and professional development within the individualistic culture of schools" (p. 44). Imagine compounding this struggle not only within the culture of their new school, but with the culture of their new home, students, colleagues, language and identity. Pierce (2007) and Callendar (2003) note that there are ways in which travelling teachers can find support and mentorship in their new homes and professions. Whether it be a telephone hotline, an internet support group, or a local mentorship program, nomadic teachers have resources available to them (Callendar, 2003; Pierce, 2007; Ferguson, 2001). I cannot say the same for *Qallunaat* teachers. There was no system in place set up by the school board for me and other *Qallunaat* teachers to find support, or even just an ear to listen, whether the struggles were personal or professional (Taylor, 1995). I was lucky enough to get along with my *Qallunaat* colleagues, and was able to discuss worries and concerns with them, but I cannot say that every *Qallunaat* teacher was that fortunate, as a side effect of being "liminal" is withdrawing. If *Qallunaat* teachers do not have other *Qallunaat* teachers available to them, or a limited amount of them, then what forms of support exist? Pierce (2007) suggests that new teachers focus on continuing to learn,

> to appreciate students, learning how to assess students' formal and informal feedback, learning how to appropriately adjust their teaching according to feedback and assessment, and learning how to discuss teaching and learning with colleagues. Such a focus on learning might help newcomers negotiate the organizational and cultural constraints of beginning to teach. (p. 47)

What are *Qallunaat* to do when these opportunities to learn are inexistent? This is a major concern that I have with the current situation for *Qallunaat* teachers in Nunavik, one which I hope my study will bring sufficient awareness to elicit change.

As a result of my liminality, and of feeling like I do not belong either here nor there (in Nunavik or Southern Quebec), the concept of 'home' is one which I struggle to define. Feeling 'at home' is a notion I am more comfortable with, as though I do not feel whole in either place, there are aspects of both experiences in which I do feel belonging. Homes provide basic needs like security, shelter and food (Reimer, 2008). While this is certainly true, feelings of tension, anxiety and discomfort also arise when I remember my family home. Together with not being

free to express myself, and the bullying I experienced at school, a feeling of belonging is not one that I equate with my childhood. On the contrary, the feelings of love and care I associate with stories, and similar to Hanson (2019), with my grandmother's house, are the safe spaces that allowed me to feel more 'at home'; where it was more comfortable to be myself.

As Hanson (2019) relates, "home is affective and relational, not merely a static sense of place" (p. 27). My decision to move to Nunavik was a conscious decision to break free; it was an opportunity to truly be myself, away from the confines of my past, including some traumatic instances of physical and sexual abuse. As I explained in the previous chapter, I did not simply live and teach in Nunavik. Having immersed myself in the community and culture for four years, I developed relationships with colleagues and students so deep, that we called ourselves family. While my Montreal family and home are the ones that I was born into, my Nunavik family became one that I had chosen; a community in which we were not kin, but were all a part of and felt belonging in. As Hanson (2019) writes, "this home is about a mutual and ongoing needing, relying on, and taking care of each other" (p. 35). Although I felt a certain belonging in Nunavik with the creation of strong familial-like bonds, this sense of belonging was complicated by the fact that as a *Qallunaat*, I was still an outsider.

Despite feeling like I did not entirely belong in Nunavik, I deeply mourned the loss of my Nunavik family and struggled to readapt to Southern life when I returned to Montreal. In sharing our stories, my participants also expressed their struggles with liminality and not feeling 'at home' in Southern Quebec. Campbell (in Hanson 2019) writes, "coming together to share these stories is a beginning or a start to finding our way home. Home meaning the place where the spirit dwells" (p. 30). According to Hanson (2019), "this sense of home can be evoked through connections to the land … through … open spaces, through ceremony, and through past memories" (p. 34). Home, in this sense, is also about "navigating webs of kinship" (p.33). As such, it is possible to have more than one figurative home and family to 'go home' to (Hanson, 2019). I began this thesis by recounting a memory of feeling at home in Nunavik, as if watching the scene from a window. Gazing out of my window and allowing myself to daydream of Nunavik is something I do regularly. The window enables me to access a world in which I feel belonging, within a world in which I do not. According to Reimer (2008), windows "are often the sites of such border practices, articulating and disarticulating the relations between here and there, inside and outside, now and then" (p. xvi). The window of any home I find myself in, is

the space in which I can look out to from inside of. It is like a portal; a third dimension in which I can both belong and not belong, as settler and *other*, in the past and present, simultaneously. It is a hybrid space, full of gaps and holes from which I can enter and exit freely. And so, as Carl Leggo, liminal scholar and poet, wrote in Hasebe-Ludt et al (2009),

> I embrace the holes. I am lost and am searching for home, but I know no dismay when I return to the hole, convinced that the hole is the place of possibility, the hole through which I might even pass on my way to wholeness. (p. 108)

While liminal beings like Leggo, myself and my participants seem to be on an endless search for 'home', writing about our liminality may help evoke a sense of belonging, as "autobiographical writing is an 'invention of self' rather than an endless search for it" (Hasebe-Ludt et al, 2009, p. 48). Thus, writing to find oneself can possibly lead to finding home, as according to Reimer (2008), "learning to read 'home' matters: it is, perhaps, the beginning of rewriting it" (Reimer, p. xviii).

Settler Theory, Inuit Counter Stories and Curriculum Theory (*Currere*)

A source that goes largely untapped for *Qallunaat* teachers in Northern communities are the Inuit teachers and staff members of the school. While most of these are hired locally, and the majority do not hold a degree in Education, the Inuit teacher is, according to my experience, the best source of knowledge and support for the *Qallunaat* teacher. While *Qallunaat* colleagues may offer personal support and a feeling of sympathy and camaraderie, the Inuit teachers have an abundance of knowledge about their culture and students which, if shared, could greatly help the *Qallunaat* teachers learn about their new home and their place in it. This will lead to professional success, as when the students realize that their *Qallunaat* teacher is interested and involved in their culture and community, the students become more willing to listen, share, and learn (Annahatak, 1998; Battiste & Barman, 1995). I have seen and heard time and again of *Qallunaat* teachers who do not get involved in the Inuit culture return home within the first three months of the school year, with numerous stories of misbehaving students and unwelcoming colleagues. If a *Qallunaat* teacher does not participate in the activities and traditions of the community, they will find it very difficult to fit in the community, but most importantly, to understand their students (Annahatak, 1998; Ferguson, 2011). Inuit colleagues will be less willing to help, and

unfortunately, misunderstandings only give way to further stereotypical discriminations of Inuit on the part of the *Qallunaat*.

On the other hand, I have often been asked, why should Inuit teachers care about the *Qallunaat* teachers' struggles? Why should they care about what another White person has to say about their culture, especially considering that historically so much damage has been done to their way of life? My answer is we need to change the focus of Northern education to suit the needs of the community. The experience of the *Qallunaat* teacher is significant and needs to be considered, as much of the learning that Inuit students undergo is the outcome of that experience. In order to provide a holistic perspective around Northern education, Inuit and *Qallunaat* teachers must work collaboratively in order to provide meaningful learning for Inuit students. However, this involves decolonizing story, in the manner that Regan (2010) suggests.

Having acted as the Director of Research for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, and having listened to the thousands of stories of residential school survivors, Regan (2010) does not believe that the apologetic words or reconciliatory language of white Canadians are enough to bring about necessary social and political change:

> as Canadian citizens, we are ultimately responsible for the past and present actions of our government. To those who say that we cannot change the past, I say that we can learn from it … Equally importantly, we can explore how this mentality continues to influence Indigenous-settler relations today. Failing to do so will ensure that, despite our vow of never again, Canada will create equally destructive policies and practices into the future. (Regan, 2010, p. 4)

To decolonize Canadian society, we must re-story history to include the counter narratives of Indigenous Canadians as told by themselves (Regan, 2010). In an act of reconciliation, we must recognize their history, but furthermore, as non-Indigenous Canadians, we must "undertake a deeply critical reflective re-examination" of ourselves (Regan, 2010, p.8). As Regan (2010) writes:

> How can we, as non-Indigenous people, unsettle ourselves to name and then transform the settler – the colonizer who lurks within – not just in words but by our actions, as we confront the history of colonization, violence, racism, and injustice that remains part of the … legacy today? To me, this is the crux of the matter. To my mind, Canadians are still on a misguided, obsessive, and mythical quest to assuage colonizer guilt by solving

> the Indian problem. In this way, we avoid looking too closely at ourselves and the collective responsibility we bear for the colonial status quo. The significant challenge that lies before us is to turn the mirror back upon ourselves and to answer the provocative question posed by historian Roger Epp regarding reconciliation in Canada: How do we solve the settler problem? (p. 11)

Thus, Regan (2010) claims that history must be re-written from an unsettling lens, and that curricula and pedagogy must be reformed in a way that re-stories our present competing histories and identities into the future (Regan, 2010; Rothberg, 2009). This ties in with Pinar's (2012) method of *currere,* and how the four phases or moments (the regressive, the progressive, the analytical, and the synthetical) can contribute in the present to finding a solution to our current problem of miseducation towards the future. As Grumet (1981) writes, "we must engage in the critical reflection that permits us to reclaim our own histories and to surpass them through the acts of remembrance and interpretation" (p. 115). In listening to our settler stories, we realize, however, that "the problem with curriculum is that we are the curriculum" as it is we "who have learned to hear only one voice at a time … it is we who have learned to offer answers rather than questions, not to make people uncomfortable" (Grumet, 1981, p.122).

Autobiographical narrative therefore holds the key towards reconciliation, as the potential for re-storying history and reforming curricula to include all voices, including those of the colonized and colonizer, marks the site for excavation (Grumet, 1981; Regan, 2010). In excavating our settler stories to include the legacy of colonization, particularly as educators and students of curriculum, and specifically for my participants and I, as *Qallunaat* who went North to teach, we can unsettle the settler within (Grumet, 1981; Regan, 2010). In deconstructing our settler stories through the process of excavation, what the participants and I remembered was hardly our original experiences of living and teaching in Nunavik, but as Grumet (1981) writes,

> broken pieces of images that remind[ed] us of what was lost. What [was] restored [was] our distrust of the account, as the experience, pieced together and reassembled, fail[ed] to cohere. There in the interstices, the spaces where the pieces don't quite meet, is where the light comes through. (p. 122)

Thus, sharing our settler stories may not restore the memory or experience of teaching in Nunavik as it was lived, but rather, the excavation of the spaces in between can disrupt hegemonic discourse and return doubt in the place of certainty (Grumet, 1981; Regan, 2010). In

this way, the process of excavation in telling our settler stories combined with critical reflection is crucial for decolonization, as it forces us to question our own assumptions. Without that calling into doubt, the re-writing of history and the reconstruction of society dwindles into reification, thereby re-instating the status quo and remaining a miseducated curriculum that the Government continues to narrate and Canadians will continue to listen to and misguidedly interpret (Grumet, 1981; Pinar, 2012; Regan, 2010).

According to Pinar (2012), the method of *currere* is a theory in which we run the course of our lived curriculum, to understand how the past contributes to our present, and anticipates our future. As such, *currere* "provides a strategy for students of curriculum to study the relations between academic knowledge and life history in the interests of self-understanding and social reconstruction" (p. 44). The method involves writing autobiographically as individuals and teachers "that might enable us to understand the problem that is the present," so that we may take a step toward changing reality (Pinar, 2012, p. 5). For Pinar (2012), the problem that needs to be changed is the fact that "educators have little or no control over the curriculum" that involves including collaboration and Indigenous perspectives in the creation and implementation of curricula (p. 5). In order to reconstruct the curriculum to effect social change, incorporation of Indigenous perspectives and voices not only involves telling and listening to the stories of Indigenous Canadians, or advocating for collaboration with them. It involves de-colonizing story, in the manner that Regan (2010) suggests.

Window Pain

Looking out the window of my living room this afternoon, I see mountains of white snow, sparkling in the radiant sunlight. I am reminded of the beautiful landscapes of the North, and although the bark of my dog protesting the neighbour's cat in our recycling bin reminds me that I am in the South, it takes but a glance upward to the vastness of the crystal clear blue sky to make the feelings of nostalgia, loss and longing send an extra chill through the window. I allow my imagination to disclose images of children playing, crunching their boots in the ice covered snow, pulling their puppies in their *qamutiks*. My heart swells with love as I pet my own husky puppy and sadly remember the dog that was my companion in the North. It is no coincidence that

I chose to adopt a husky from the Northern Paws Project – a charity that rescues stray dogs from the North and finds them homes in the South. My Northern teaching experience dominates all facets of my life, personal as much as professional, and so it is no wonder that I find myself, as many other teachers who have gone abroad and return home, belonging neither here nor there, but feeling betwixt and between (Pierce, 2007).

Chapter Three – Brick by Brick: Constructing a Methodology

Laying the Ground Work

The Inuit of Nunavik, Quebec would appear to live in one of the world's most challenging geographic regions. With its harsh climate and frozen wild terrain, what at first glance seems like a barren land of snow and ice is actually teeming with life. Populations of animals such as caribou, polar bear, and arctic fox, just to name a few, live and thrive in the region. Counting on the laws of nature, the animals that inhabit Nunavik are not alone. Their human companions, the Inuit, have lived off the land for hundreds of thousands of years. Despite the extreme cold and the constant threat of famine, families of Inuit travelled together, following the animals, their only source of survival. Today, relying on their memories, elders often tell stories about such difficult times, teaching Inuit children invaluable lessons of culture and tradition. Among the frozen tundra stand physical monuments of these ancient people, stone statues which, much like the stories of their creators, have endured and survived the hardships of the land. These monuments called *inuksuit* (plural) have stood the test of time, having been erected to guide people either to a source of food, along the right path when travelling in dangerous blizzards, or perhaps to let future generations of Inuit know that once, their ancestors stood in the exact same place (Hallendy, 2015). In each instance an *inukshuk* (singular) is a memory. Although some may have gotten weathered, etched with the harsh conditions that surround them, the *inuksuit* stand tall among the tundra – physical reminders of a strong and proud culture that continues to struggle, but more importantly, that continues to survive.

An *inukshuk* holds various meanings and memories to the different people and animals that have encountered it over the years. Having stumbled upon many *inuksuit* in the four years I spent living and teaching in Nunavik, the rock structures have taken on a more personal meaning. Looking at various pictures of *inuksuit*, I am not only reminded of the land and the people, but of my teaching. The memories of my experience teaching in Nunavik transcend to the present, as the skills and knowledge I gained there and then, play a vital role in my teaching now and here, in my hometown of Laval, a city located within the greater region of Montreal, Quebec. My teaching methods and strategies have been informed and transformed by this experience, and I constantly wonder if such memories and experiences have had similar effects on other teachers returning from Nunavik. I have not encountered any such stories in my

research, so this burning question has become the foundation of my doctoral research. My theoretical approach has been discussed in the previous chapter. What follows is an explanation of my methodological approach, grounded in Indigenous methodologies, memory work, self-study and poetic inquiry.

An Indigenous Framework: Decolonizing Research Methodologies

"Research is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world's vocabulary." (Smith, 1999, p.1)

I spent four years in a remote Inuit community with a population of less than four hundred. No restaurants, no movie theatres, just the school, the church, the Co-op (general store) and the arena. The only way in and out of the community is by plane. I taught Secondary English and Social Studies, and my classes were composed of multi-levels: juniors in one class (secondary 1-2) and seniors in the other (secondary 3-4-5), with a total of about twelve students each year. I was an active member of the community, always participating in traditional and contemporary events and customs. I learned Inuktitut from my students and wore parkas and seal-skin boots made especially for me. I immersed myself in the Inuit culture and developed a great love and respect for the town and people. Having spent such time in the community as an active learner, I no longer felt like an outsider. In fact, I felt at home in the Nunavik community. As discussed in previous chapters, eight years have passed since I've returned to Southern Quebec, and nostalgia has set in so deeply that I long to relive my time in Nunavik, but am stuck doing so through my memories, and most recently, through my research. This begs a question of ethics: not being Inuit myself, is it appropriate for me to conduct research related to an Inuit community? I have lived in Nunavik for numerous years and participated actively as a community member. I aligned myself with an Indigenist world view as a result of my experience (Tanaka, 2016; Wilson, 2008). I combined my experiential knowledge and lived experience with the tenets of decolonizing and Indigenous research methodologies, conducting my study to honour and listen to the Inuit people who helped inform it (Battiste & Barman, 1995; Wilson, 2008).

As Smith (1999) explains in *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, most research on Indigenous peoples is written from a Western, imperialist viewpoint that portrays Aboriginals as subhuman. Such Eurocentric research marginalizes Indigenous

people as the uncivilized *other* (Jackson, 2007; Razack, 2004; Smith, 1999; Venne, 2004). The culture of colonization has dehumanized Indigenous people, characterizing them as backwards (Jackson, 2007; Razack, 2004; Smith, 1999; Venne, 2004). The attempt to assimilate Native peoples, first through colonization, then through globalization, continues to negatively affect Indigenous populations across Canada. Robbed of their lands, forced to live in reserves, relocated to remote locations in the high Arctic, subjected to dog slaughters, made dependent on Southern goods, exposed to new diseases, alcohol and drug abuse, and being subjected to the horrors of the residential school era, are just some of the attempts at assimilation that continue to play a very painful and devastating role in contemporary Inuit life (Altamirano-Jimenez, 2004; Chabot, 2003; Gombay, 2010; Heininen & Southcott, 2010; Nuttall, 2010; Searles, 2002;Venne, 2004).

Indigenous populations are experiencing a culture loss and identity crisis as they struggle to preserve their traditions, language and heritage (Jackson, 2007; Razack, 2004; Smith, 1999). Smith (1999) therefore advises non-Natives conducting research on Native people to use decolonizing methodologies to ensure that "research reaches the people who have helped make it" and that the final results of the study be "disseminated back to the people in culturally appropriate ways" (p. 15). The methods I used to conduct my research respect the Inuit tradition of story-telling, as my participants narrated stories of their experiences and memories of teaching in Nunavik. Having collected the data through story, my participants and I proceeded to analyse the data via poetic inquiry, thus adding another layer of homage to the Inuit tradition of narrative. Moreover, presenting my findings as a collection of poems, rather than as an expository report filled with academic jargon, helps make the results of my study more reflective of and accessible to the people who have helped inform it. In these ways, my study is aligned with and attempts to emphasize the view that research with Indigenous peoples should not only reach the people that have helped create it, but that it be disseminated in culturally appropriate ways (Cole & Knowles, 2008; Smith, 1999). Thus, the results of my study will be shared with students, teachers, and any other Inuit community member wishing to access the findings of this study, as it is my intent to publish the poems so that they are circulated in the communities, as well as present them in future conferences, articles, books, journals and any other publications.

Collecting the data through story-telling and disseminating the information through poetry, however, does not complete my research ethic. In order to genuinely be accepted as

decolonizing and respectful of the Inuit communities concerned with the study, I made a mindful commitment to establish Indigenous research methodologies as the framework of my study. According to Wilson (2008), Indigenous researchers are beginning to articulate their own "research paradigms and to demand that research conducted in our communities follows our codes of conduct and honours our systems of knowledge and worldviews" (p. 8). More often than not, researchers enter the communities without consulting the people, conduct their research, and then leave, without making the information gathered available to the people that have helped inform it (Smith, 1999; Wilson, 2008). As Wilson (2008) states:

> One of the major complaints that Indigenous people have about the social sciences (and science in general) – is that researchers come from outside the community to "study" Indigenous problems … researchers, no matter how objective they claim their methods and themselves to be, do bring with them their own set of biases … in addition this approach focuses on problems, and often imposes outside solutions, rather than appreciating and expanding upon the resources available within Indigenous communities. (p. 16)

One of the most important criteria for conducting Indigenous research is to have a "good heart" (Wilson, 2008, p. 59-60). In this context, having a good heart means that the motives for conducting research are not negative or selfish, as that could bring harm and suffering to Indigenous communities (Wilson, 2008). Because my participants and I feel strongly that we are part of the Nunavik Inuit community and position ourselves as supporters, my study aligns itself with Inuit values. Having designed my study through the lens of a researcher-storyteller allows my study to be informed and respectful of the Inuit tradition of story-telling (Tanaka, 2016; Wilson, 2008). Indigenous author Thomas King (2003) states "the truth about stories is that that's all that we are" (p.2). In telling and listening to each other's stories, we learn about ourselves, our past, who we are, where we are from, where we have been and where we are going. In attending to the different components that Indigenous research requires, then, the participants and I not only imparted our own life experiences in listening to each other's stories, but in doing so, we uncovered those of our Inuit students and colleagues – honouring and reinforcing the notion that "all things are related and connected" (Wilson, 2008, p. 59-60). In sharing our stories with open hearts and open minds, we listened to the hearts of others, bringing

about new understandings about our past experiences, and in doing so discovered how each story and voice intertwines, supports, and informs the other.

For Indigenous researchers, research is not just research; it is a ceremony (Wilson, 2008). Acknowledging the cosmos, preparing the self, honouring the story-tellers, and respectful listening are all part of the spiritual journey (Battiste & Barman, 1995; Wilson 2008). Not one element of a study can stand on its own; each component is built upon in an organic, holistic way. Much like an *inukshuk*, Indigenous-informed research relies on each supporting block; remove one, and the study will not stand. As each stone balances and depends on the other for support, so does the framework of my study.

Research as Ceremony

Indigenous authors have often used various interpretations of the medicine wheel for the framework of their studies (Wilson, 2008). The framework of my study honours this tradition, yet in a more personal adaptation. My methodological framework is drawn as an *inukshuk* made up of four solid stones. I first got the idea when I was creating a concept map to help organize my ideas about how I wanted my study to be carried out (Butler-Kisber, 2010; Maxwell, 2015). Thinking about which methodologies I had chosen to use and why, I was doodling in my researcher journal when I experienced a sudden jolt of creativity that surged through all parts of my being. A sudden flash, like that of a lightning bolt, ignited my body, mind and spirit. Why not create a concept map in the form of an *inukshuk*? And so the idea was born, and in a state of ecstatic inspiration, I crossed out the complicated concept map I had been struggling with and drew an *inukshuk* composed of four stones to represent the four founding blocks of my methodological framework.

The *inukshuk* I had drawn astounded me. It was a very simple structure, one that was rough in artistic expression, and yet that demonstrated the harmony, support, balance, interconnectedness, unity and necessity I was searching for. Indeed, this breakthrough not only renewed my energy and revitalized my excitement in the project, but confirmed that I was on the right path. Perhaps it was just a genius stroke of luck or perhaps it was… *could* it have been more? I had been immersing myself in the tenets of Indigenous research. I had committed to performing research as ceremony, acknowledging the land, honouring the story-teller and listening to the story. Looking back, I am astonished at how profound that moment was, as I

realize now that the *inukshuk* model was not just the basis for my methodology, but that from that point on, it has become a guide and source of inspiration throughout my doctoral process. It provided me with a generous opportunity and a transformative experience. In that moment the research spoke to me. Little did I know that, in devoting myself to ceremony, the journey would nurture my spirit along the way. The research had spoken to me, and for this I am honoured, but it also prepared my ear, and for this I am humbled. It showed me how to listen, and for this I am eternally grateful. And so, with my arms raised in acknowledgment, I offer thanks. *Nakurmik* [1] *Nia:wen*.[2] \0/ [3]

The *Inukshuk* Model: Founding Blocks

> *Each stone is a separate entity. Each supports, and is supported by, the one above and the one below it. No one piece is any more or less important than another. Its strength lies in its unity. Its significance comes from its meaning as a whole […] The stones which make up the Inukshuk are secured through balance. They are chosen for how well they fit together. Looking at the structure it can be easily seen that the removal of even one stone will destroy the integrity of the whole.* (The Story of the Inukshuk, 2016, para. 3-4)

At the head of my methodological *inukshuk* rests the top stone: *Indigenous research methods*. Being the first and top stone, it sets the vision and tone for the whole study and acts as a guiding element, ensuring that all the other "stones", or methods, are similar in spirit. Underneath the head follows a middle stone: *memory work*. The memory work that my participants and I underwent played a crucial role, as the study centers upon memories of teaching in Nunavik. Underneath the memory work stone are two smaller stones that support the body and head of the *inukshuk*: these stones represent *collaborative self-study* and *poetic inquiry*.

In order to perform the research, my participants and I listened to, shared, discussed and reflected on the stories of our experiences before gaining any new knowledge and insights about our teaching methods and how they have been influenced by these experiences. Poetic inquiry is the method we used to analyse these stories as well as present our findings and memories. The dependant and supporting relationship of each stone to the other, and then in turn to itself, is informed by each façade of the different stones, making the *inukshuk* a structure that is not only

[1] Thank you in Inuktitut, in honour and acknowledgment of the people with whom this study was informed.
[2] Thank you in Mohawk, in honour and acknowledgment of the land on which this study was performed.
[3] Pictogram of a head and arms raised to the sky as an expression of thanks and acknowledgment, as in Tanaka's (2016) *Learning and teaching together: Weaving Indigenous ways of knowing into education*.

strong, but spiritual. As each stone was delicately mounted, my participants and I performed research as ceremony; one that honours Inuit culture and tradition.

In our collaborative journey, we delved deep into our memories and experiences, individually and collectively, exploring our stories as *Qallunaat* who went North to teach. In sharing our settler stories we discovered truths that were hidden about our selves, and explored how our stories revealed the stories of our past Inuit students and colleagues (Regan, 2010). In attending to ceremony with open hearts and open minds, we discovered how our stories are connected to every thing and every one we have encountered in our past Nunavik experiences, and how all of these relations continue to inform our present towards the future (S. Deer, 2020; Pinar, 2015; Wilson, 2008).

According to Wilson (2008), "the purpose of any ceremony is to build stronger relationships or bridge the distance between our cosmos and us" and in approaching the study with "open minds and good hearts" we "uncovered the nature of this ceremony" (p. 137). We learned that like the stones in an *inukshuk*, each individual voice and story is connected to a larger whole; that each story and voice is tied to the other and to ourselves, and all the spaces in between (S. Deer, 2020; Pinar, 2015). In opening our eyes, ears and hearts through ceremony, Spirit gave us the courage to see and acknowledge how we and all voices, peoples, places, and all the spaces in and between our memories and experiences contribute to a larger narrative (Pinar, 2015; Wilson, 2009). We learned how these multi-layered and multi-textured ways of thinking, knowing, and doing weave in and out of our past, informing our present towards the future (S. Deer, 2020; Pinar, 2015, Wilson, 2008). In telling and listening to our own and each other's stories, then, we learned how each voice informs and supports the other, and how re-storying and re-writing our individual stories and collective histories into the future was a crucial step for continuing our life-long journeys of becoming (S. Deer, 2020; Pinar, 2015; Regan, 2010).

The Second Stone: Memory Work

As discussed previously, memories of my experience living and teaching in Nunavik make themselves present in my daily life, both personally and professionally. The impact of these memories is most strongly felt in my present teaching style. Having taught Inuit students in Nunavik for the first four years of my career has had multiple positive consequences on my

teaching style, such as approachability, patience, empathy, creativity, flexibility, the aptitude to build strong relationships with students, and the ability to infuse humour while maintaining efficient class management. The experience has also strengthened my observation skills and increased my ability to notice and help diagnose learning difficulties, as well as identify at-risk behaviours such as substance abuse, anxiety and depression. As such, I have become a valuable presence when creating or adding information to Individual Education Plans (IEPs) in terms of student weaknesses and strengths, but also in formulating methods and strategies to help students achieve their goals, whether academic, behavioural, organizational, social, and/or any combination of these broader areas of learning and development. In my classroom, these skills are demonstrated in the extreme care I take to slow down and use comprehensible vocabulary when giving instructions, teaching students how to highlight and summarize to remember key information, as well as adapting and modifying assignments to suit each student's learning objectives. I owe all of these methods and strategies to those first four years in Nunavik, as I use them on a daily basis here in Southern Quebec. This observation has made me very curious to discover if other post-Nunavik teachers encounter similar influences in their current practices.

To explore this question, my participants and I engaged in memory work in order to discover how much of the past exists in the present, because memory work is "the pedagogy of memory and the idea of how memory and the past can be a productive learning space for the present and future" (Mitchell et al, 2011, p. 1). Keeping Indigenous methods at the forefront of this study, my participants and I did not narrate stories in a linear fashion, isolating only one event, but rather in a circle, listening to all the different perspectives in the story before returning to one's own (Battiste & Barman, 1995; Tanaka, 2010; Wilson, 2008). From within an Indigenous worldview, my participants and I examined our memories holistically and ceremoniously, including "an emphasis beyond mental capacities to include ecological, spiritual, and social dimensions" (Tanaka, 2011, p. 60). In this way our remembering did not end once the story was over, but continued as a revisiting. In our revisits, we made new observations and gained new insights into our pasts, "… renewing and recreating people, places and beings, and their relationships with one another" (Tanaka, 2011, p. 69).

> Another important reason for not narrating linear stories of our memories was because, they would only reveal the construction whose decoding we are concerned with in their overall effect, not in the way they were produced. We concentrate instead on scenes,

> events, particular stories and hope that by reproducing them in detail it will be possible to subvert the self-censorship that creates harmony in a whole-life story. (Haug, 2000, p. 157)

In reaching towards revealing the details of our memories, then, my participants and I reproduced our stories in writing as well as narrated them orally in order to deconstruct and analyse them (Clare & Johnson, 2000; Haug, 2000). According to Haug (2000), writing the stories down allows for textual analysis of the memory, rather than psychological analysis of the person. To deconstruct the memories properly, Haug (2000) and Clare and Johnson (2000) suggest that the texts be written in the third person with as much detail as possible to avoid censorship. Clare and Johnson (2000) also advise that the texts be written with some speed, preferably within an hour, to reduce opportunities of self-editing, "making the contradictions of everyday life more available for analysis" (p. 198). After having written the stories, the participants and I then shared our memory texts with the group, reading them out loud and answering four to five different questions about them (Haug, 2000). The questions were generated, accepted, rejected, altered and extended by the participants to encourage the fostering of trust and collectivity among the group (Clare & Johnson, 2000; Haug, 2000). Having each of the participants read, share and discuss each text allowed different perspectives, new insights and knowledge to emerge:

> The key value of the method, indeed, is this dialogue of different perspectives on the meanings of memories, a dialogue which (if it can be sustained) accentuates the differences within the reading/research group, denaturalizes the storytelling itself, makes strange the familiar ordinariness of our lives and induces in the writer further self-reflection. (Clare & Johnson, 2000, p. 203)

The second chapter of Mitchell and Weber's 2014 book, *Reinventing Ourselves as Teachers: Beyond Nostalgia* outlined a helpful protocol for writing memory texts:

> 1. Focus on a particular example of or incident surrounding the object of experience: describe specific events, an adventure, a particular moment.
> 2. Describe the experience from the inside, as it were; almost like a state of mind: the feelings, the mood, the emotions, etc.
> 3. Describe the experience as you live(d) through it. Avoid causal explanations and generalizations. For example, this is not the place to state what caused your illness, why

you like swimming so much, or why you feel that children tend to like to play outdoors more than indoors.

4. Try to focus on an example of an experience which stands out for its vividness, or because it was the first time.

5. Attend to how the body feels, how things smell(ed), how they sound(ed), etc.

6. Avoid trying to beautify your account with fancy phrases or flowery terminology (p. 57)

Once the stories were submitted to the group, and each member had the chance to share their memory text, we asked some questions that Mitchell and Weber (2014) suggested in order to facilitate deconstruction and analysis:

- Are there ambiguities?
- What clichés are used? Why?
- What's missing from these memories?
- What are the commonalities? How does the group account for anomalies?
- How do these memories run 'against the grain' of the expected?
- What symbolic language is used? What does it seem to symbolize?
- What concrete links can be made to a teaching episode now? (p. 63)

Photographic Prompts

Before the participants began writing their memory texts, however, it was important that the participants used a prompt to provoke remembering and revisiting more vividly. For this study, I asked my participants to bring in some favourite or significant photographs of their teaching experiences in Nunavik. "Although we are all familiar with the saying 'a picture is worth a thousand words', it is probably more accurate to say that a picture evokes a thousand words (or more)" (Mitchell & Weber, 2014, p.79). In her study featuring school photos and portraits, Mitchell (2014) discusses how the photographic prompts allowed her participants to "…extend the work of memory and reinvention into a more visual form, inviting [participants] to not only to look back on [themselves] as former students, but also forward to [themselves] in the classroom now" (p. 74-75). Similarly, the pictures that my participants and I selected to represent our experiences in Nunavik allowed us to revisit, deconstruct and analyse the memories from new and different angles. The pictures of meaningful moments, people and events not only

prompted our discussions and allowed us to revisit our memories, but were instrumental during our analysis. Due to this method we were able to discover what teaching strategies, methods and skills we gained there and then (in Nunavik) and how they are being used here and now (Southern Quebec) in our current practices. Furthermore, they lead to a discussion of how these memories could possibly affect our future careers.

It is important to note that while we were discussing our selves, we also discussed the people and the events captured in the memories that we were revisiting, as who (our Inuit students and colleagues) and what (community events and traditions) appeared in the pictures were equally informative. Moreover, who and what did not appear, or as Mitchell and Weber (2014) put it, "…what is hidden, what never was, what lurks in the background, and … what is lost once the photograph is lost" allowed for even deeper investigation (p.114). These became apparent through analysis, their existence no longer unnoticed, ignored, omitted and/or silenced. In unsettling and unmasking our settler stories, we examined in detail how our unconscious colonial mind frames and language haunted our memories and continued the legacy of colonialism in Nunavik (Grumet, 1981; Regan, 2010; Strong et al, 2020). Photographic prompts, then, allowed my participants and I to discover an unsettling perspective that would help uncover the "true" subject of our memories in our efforts to reach towards an answer to the research question (Hampl, 1999). This new knowledge promoted a marked change in how we viewed ourselves, through the acknowledgment and understanding of how our past not only affected but continues to influence our present, which in turn, may impact our future.

Nostalgia as Method

Remembering the past can often be a nostalgic experience. Nostalgia, although a theoretical concept discussed in the previous chapter, can also serve as a productive tool in the deconstruction and analysis of one's memories of a past experience; that is, in bringing a past memory forward into the present towards the future (Grumet, 1981; Pinar, 2012; Strong-Wilson, 2008). For nostalgia to be an effective form of critical remembering in memory work, one must closely examine the memory and all the different points of view from which it was constructed. To reveal the true subject of our memories of living and teaching in Nunavik, for instance, the participants and I examined our experiences through our stories, but also through those of our past Inuit students and colleagues, thereby reconstructing the memories as inclusive of the voices

and spaces in between (Grumet, 1981; Hampl, 1999). Using nostalgia as a method therefore requires using "'fragments of memory' as 'traction points for a critical intelligence'… "it can be a way of keeping all sorts of questions open, of thickening things up" (Strong-Wilson et al, 2013, p. 4). Different methods for nostalgia include literary (written, such as memoir and autobiography), and visual (such as collage and film) (Strong-Wilson et al, 2013). The method that stood out to me, and that I found most suitable for my research, was literary, in order to maintain and reinforce the Inuit story-telling tradition.

For Hampl (1999), the memoir is like a "travel piece", and the rememberer akin to a "pilgrim, seeking and wondering" (Hampl, 1999, p. 36). Hampl (1999) describes (in her vignette about her first piano lesson) how the first draft of memoir writing is always filled with inconsistencies, lies, questions, and gaps in the knowledge and memory of the writer. But it is these inconsistencies which demand a revision of the draft in order to seek out the truth. The first draft, explains Hampl (1999), is governed by the heart:

> Its commands are what the writer obeys – often without knowing it...Intimacy with a piece of writing, as with a person, comes from paying attention to the revelations it is capable of giving, not my imposing my own notions and agenda, no matter how well intentioned they might be. I try to let pretty much anything happen on a first draft. A careful first draft is a failed first draft. (p. 28)

That is why there may be so many inaccuracies in a first draft. Hampl (1999) didn't censor, she didn't judge; she just kept writing. On revisiting her first draft, Hampl (1999) relates that it was not just the lies that made her pause, but mainly, that the piece had not "found its subject; it [was]n't yet about what it wants to be about" (p. 29). Hampl (1999) explains an important shift occurs in re-writing a first draft; rather than focusing on the inaccuracies of the text, these inconstancies become indicative of something more meaningful. In revisiting her first draft, Hampl (1999) discovered that there are symbols in the details of her memoir, just as there are symbols in the details of photographs (Mitchell and Reid-Walsh, 2002). The details, upon examination and analysis, become symbols. The meaning of the symbols is constructed by the author through revision and critical nostalgia – through the act of re-discovering the past:

> We find, in our details and broken, obscured images, the language of symbol. Here memory impulsively reaches out and embraces imagination. That is the resort to

> invention. It isn't a lie, but an act of necessity, as the innate urge to locate the truth always is. (Hampl, 1999, p. 31)

Thus, the next step to locating the truth is a second draft, a truer revision, not with flowery editing of the first, but extensive analysis of symbols to discover the true subject of the memoir.

According to Hampl (1999), memoir seeks to talk about the 'big issues' of history and peace, death and love (p. 32). True memoir, then, is written to remember not only the self, but "in the act of remembering, the personal environment expands, resonates beyond itself, beyond its 'subject', into the endless and tragic recollection that is history" (p. 32). In this way, nostalgia can be a critical form of remembering by attending to what is being forgotten or omitted in our memories and, particularly for my participants and I, what is being forgotten or omitted in our settler stories (Eppert, 2003; Regan, 2010). While Eppert is not in favour of remembering for nostalgic purposes, her perspective on forgetting can mark the site for excavation; that is, critical reflection in remembering can provide significant insights into our past towards the reconstruction of our future (Eppert, 2003; Grumet, 1981). In other words, by attending to our forgetting as we are remembering, we can unsettle our settler stories and re-story our past towards the future (Eppert, 2003; Grumet, 1981; Pinar, 2012; Regan, 2010).

To illustrate, in Eppert's (2003) discussion of Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, she points out that forgetting and remembering, while irrevocably tied to each other, are also connected to world history. In her analysis of *Beloved*, in which the main subject is the history of slavery, Eppert claims that what is remembered should be forgotten – not as indifference or ignorance, but as a method for attaining peace. "Forgetting thus entails not the passing on (in the sense of passing by) of remembrance but rather a necessary passage to a space to which remembrance cannot readily bring us" (Eppert, 2003, p. 191). To go beyond the trauma, the pain and the hatred, is thus the goal of forgetting, as it signifies a forgiveness. In our settler stories, then, it is important to go beyond the nostalgic re-visiting of memories and romanticized re-imaginations of our past Northern experiences in our present southern Quebec lives (Boym, 2001; Eppert, 2003; Strong et al, 2014). It is important to move beyond the feelings of guilt associated with our settler stories, as remaining trapped in that kind of harmful remembering does not allow for the critical reflection required to move beyond the legacy and language of colonialism (Eppert, 2003; Regan, 2010). As Eppert (2003) writes, to forget means to forgive; to forgive is to cleanse, and one cannot exist without the other:

> To forgive is not merely to remember, not merely to give a new meaning to an old event, it is to change the past event, and to conserve the change in the present. The event … appears as a repetition, as a doubled past, both the sinful and the cleansed one. (p. 192)

In re-storying our settler stories, we revise our memories to include forgiving as a productive form of remembering; a remembering that allows us to forget; to learn from the past into the future (Eppert, 2003; Pinar, 2012; Regan, 2010; Strong et al, 2013). Without revision or re-vision of our memories, we would not see the symbols in the details, revelatory of the true subject of our memories, and we would not be able to correct our vision of the North in the South (Hampl, 1999). Without revision, we would not be able to reach towards truth and forgiveness (Eppert, 2003; Hampl, 1999). As Hampl (1999) states:

> to write one's life is to live it twice, and the second living is both spiritual and historical, for a memoir reaches deep within the personality as it seeks its narrative form and also grasps the life-of-the-times as no political analysis can. (p. 37)

In memory work, another tool that can be useful in reaching towards critical nostalgia as a form of productive remembering is the photograph. Mitchell and Reid-Walsh (2002) explain how memory work aims towards an understanding of the present and future by means of the past. As such, remembering and forgetting, and even resistance to remembering, are all central to research (Mitchell and Reid-Walsh, 2002). What is key to memory work is deconstructing and analysis, rather than just the collecting of memories; that is, the remember-er undergoes a "deliberate remembering" to find out not just how the past appeared, but *why* the past appeared the way it did (Mitchell and Reid-Walsh, 2002, p. 62). The methods involving critical nostalgia and productive remembering in memory work, including the use of photographs, are based on a first draft/second draft approach. In the first draft, the photograph can serve as a prompt for a memory text, as discussed earlier in this chapter, but in the second draft, the photograph can provide corrections, and as such is considered a reliable source of information for remembering and revealing the true subject of a memory (Mitchell and Reid-Walsh, 2002). As discussed earlier with the example of her piano lesson memoir, Hampl (1999) discovered through revision in composing her second draft, the "lies" or mistakes of her memory that were present in her first draft. By capturing and presenting all the elements that appear and that may be forgotten in a memory (the people, places and things), the photograph can be a helpful tool for revision in memory work. Photographs can provide corrections, illuminate gaps, highlight omissions, permit

the investigation of details and symbols, and provoke questions that are necessary for critical reflection, analysis and deconstruction. As such, Mitchell and Reid-Walsh (2002) have outlined a protocol for the use of photographs in memory work:

1. Consider the human subject(s) of the photograph. Start with a simple description, and then move into an account in which you can take up the position of the subject. In this part of the exercise, it is helpful to use the third person ("she" rather than "I" for instance). To bring out the feelings associated with the photograph, you may visualize yourself as the subject as she was at that moment, in the picture; this can be done in turn with all of the photograph's human subjects, if there is more than one and even with inanimate objects in the picture.
2. Consider the picture's context of production. Where, when, how, by whom and why was the photograph taken?
3. Consider the context in which an image of this sort would have been made. What photographic technologies were used? What are the aesthetics of the image? Does it conform with certain photographic images?
4. Consider the photograph's currency in its context or contexts of reception. Who or what was the photograph made for? Who has it now, and where has it been kept? Who saw it then and who sees it now? (pp.68-69)

Thus, after re-viewing the photographs and writing a second draft of our memory texts, my participants and I had the opportunity to engage in memory work using revision, critical nostalgia, and photographs as tools conducive to productive remembering. These multiple uses of photograph and nostalgia helped us uncover layers of meaning from multiple viewpoints, allowing an opportunity for forgetting, forgiving, cleansing and finding peace. "Remembrance followed by forgetting clears a space for original thought – for the writing of an alternate conclusion," one that, in my study, allowed participants to gain a new understanding of the past; elicit new knowledge and motivate self-improvement both professionally and personally (Eppert, 2003, p. 192).

The Third Stone: Self-study

According to Battiste and Barman (1995),

> Aboriginal epistemology is grounded in the self, the spirit, the unknown. Understanding of the universe must be grounded in the spirit. Knowledge must be sought through the steam of the inner space in unison with all instruments of knowing and conditions that make individuals receptive to knowing. Ultimately it was in the self that Aboriginal people discovered great resources for coming to grips with life's mysteries. (p.108)

Self-study emerged in the late 1980s during what Lincoln and Denzin call the "crisis of representation" (in Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009, p. 66). Education scholars felt outside of the academic loop, disconnected from research designs that were written in the distanced voice of the third person. Education researchers thus turned to ethnography and to studying and writing about their own practices in the first person, a trend that has now opened the door for many different self-study methodologies such as videotaping, journaling, narrative, and collage, to name a few (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2009; Louie et al, 2003; Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009). Because my study is one that deals with memory, interpretation and reflection, processes which are of an introspective nature, I felt that self-study, grounded in collaboration, was the best way to get at the deep inner workings and particular issues of living and teaching in Nunavik. When designing my study, I anticipated that most of our conversations would stem from nostalgic memories reflective of longing for Nunavik and for our Northern home and family. Those personal, experiential and emotional knowledges were significant 'informants' in my study.

Historically speaking, nostalgia has been defined as an incurable condition connected to mourning, loss, and deep feelings of grief for one's native land (Atia & Davies, 2010; Boym, 2001). In fact, the word nostalgia is composed of the Greek *nostos*, 'return to the native land', and *Algos*, meaning suffering or grief, "so that thus far it is possible from the force of the sound Nostalgia to define the sad mood originating from the desire for the return to one's native land" (p. 182). According to Boym (2001) there is no cure for nostalgia, but Atia and Davies (2010) write, "Nostalgia was a medical condition, a state of fever and lassitude that was potentially fatal if left untreated, but readily cured by a return home" (p. 182). While Nunavik is not our native home, the participants and I, after having spent numerous years feeling "at home" in Nunavik, struggle to feel at home in our Southern Quebec places of origin. This liminality causes us to feel as exiles from our own culture and society (Atia & Davies, 2010). The participants and I cannot

return to Nunavik for various personal and professional reasons (such as family commitments and employment opportunities), which leaves us in a constant state of grief for our Northern homes. The perpetual search and longing for home is exemplified in our attempts to recreate aspects of our Northern lifestyle in Southern Quebec (Boym, 2001). These unsuccessful attempts at recreating deep community bonds and finding landscapes and cultural activities reminiscent of our Nunavik experiences in urban areas such as Montreal can have potentially harmful emotional and psychological effects, however, in studying our nostalgia together, the participants and I were able to reflect critically on our memories and find a way to live with our liminality (Boym, 2001).

As Atia and Davies (2010) write, "what is achieved by bringing together nostalgia criticism and memory studies … is something rather different. Here, nostalgia is read not only as a symptomatic state of mind, but also as a way of shaping and directing historical consciousness" (p. 182). Moving past imaginative inventions and failed idyllic recreations through the collective study of nostalgia was a critical step in our collaborative self-study, as it enabled a different kind of emotional and experiential knowledge to take over and unsettle our memories of living and teaching in Nunavik. In this way, "subversive nostalgic thinking can spark new connections and bring about fresh understanding" in a "much more mobile, more active, and more self-aware" fashion that "projects an ideal home ahead of us rather than behind" and that represents change, moving on and "not standing still" (Atia & Davies, p. 183). Thus, in studying our nostalgia collaboratively, the participants and I were able to connect our past experiences to our current lives, so as understand how they continue to influence, impact and inform our personal and professional practices towards the future.

Teaching can be a very personal endeavour, as it involves infusing our own perspectives and experiences of a subject (or subjects), and sharing them with others. The way a teacher approaches teaching is unique to his/her own personality, culture, education, beliefs, memories and experiences. It therefore only makes sense that the tools used to discover and learn from that experience be of a personal nature as well (Pinnegar & Hamilton 2009). As Pinnegar and Hamilton (2009) state, the researcher herself is a research tool, "because all data are filtered directly through the eyes of the researcher, detachment is avoided and careful subjectivity requires self-conscious and rigorous examination for bias along each step of the research process" (p. 69). In my study, examination of settler bias was at the forefront of each step, as

collaborative remembering and re-storying through revision, re-writing, deconstruction and analysis strove to allow each voice and perspective in our memories and experiences of living and teaching in Nunavik to be heard and acknowledged. As my participants and I are part of a small minority of post-Nunavik returnees in the greater Montreal area, and because we were well acquainted with each other, we felt comfort in sharing our memories and discussing our nostalgia with fellow liminal *Qallunaat*. The trust, goodwill, and confidentiality between us provided a safe ground not only for expressing emotional memories and experiences, but for understanding those feelings, and supporting each other in finding and making new meanings of the past as well as connecting them to the present and future (Chang et al, 2003; Cresswell, 2014; Pinar, 2012). As the principal researcher of this study, it was my role to guide the conversations and lead the participants and myself into deep and rigorous explorations of feelings, memories and experiences, not only to help make meaning for ourselves, but to uncover the true subject of our memory texts by finding, understanding, and learning from the ghosts, silences, omissions, and counter stories embedded within our settler stories.

Like teaching, research is a personal venture, as researchers examine ideas and notions that hold deep value for themselves whether personally, professionally or both, and as such, and that are worth doing for their "direct contribution to one's own self-realization" (Bullough & Pinnegar 2001, p. 13). According to Atia and Davies (2010), the study of our own nostalgia can also contribute to uncovering knowledge about our history:

> Whatever its object, nostalgia serves as a negotiation between continuity and discontinuity: it insists on the bond between our present selves and a certain fragment of the past, but also on the force of our separation from what we have lost. (184)

Thus, in examining our past Nunavik experiences through self-study and memory work, the participants and I not only studied our nostalgia in an attempt to reach towards an answer to the research question, but we also examined how nostalgia influences, impacts, and informs our present lives as a consequence of being separated from Nunavik. As Atia and Davies (2010) state, "some of the most sophisticated of all analyses of nostalgia have described it in terms of the continuity that it gives to our identity in an age of unsettling change" (p. 184). In examining our nostalgic memories of teaching and living in Nunavik through collaboration and self-study, the participants and I were able to acknowledge our settler stories, and in doing so, unsettle our

past memories and re-story our present into the future by identifying ourselves as Indigenous supporters, as a continuity of the work inspired by going there, to Nunavik.

Understanding Collaboration

As mentioned above, one of the crucial features of self-study involves collaboration, not just for support and validity in data collection and analysis, but for the participants to gain a realization of their own selves – and particular to my study, of our teaching: paying special attention to how our nostalgia plays a critical role in our current practices in the South. The analyses of our memory texts provoked a self-realization learned through revisiting memories and allowing these memories to speak. To let the memories speak and to see what the teachers, myself included, have learned about living and teaching in Nunavik, what feelings we are left holding on to, what memories we strongly cling to, what events we have forgotten, and what issues we still struggle to understand, and in turn how these affect us in our daily personal and professional teaching lives, is what my collaborative self-study aimed to discover.

Engaging in collective remembering and nostalgia methodologically, to name "the particular emotion or way of thinking that arises from a deeply felt encounter between our personal continuities and discontinuities," allowed us to delve into exploring the research question from a reflective stance, giving "depth to our awareness of the other places, times and possibilities that are at once integral to who we are and definitively alien to us" (Atia & Davies, 2010, p. 184). In this sense, nostalgia functioned "as a kind of critical self-consciousness," which informed and provided insights into our presence as settler teachers in the North and *Qallunaat* teachers in the South (Atia & Davies, 2010, p. 184).

Collaboration in self-study and memory work was an intricate and vital part of my study in reaching towards an answer to the research question, but it was also imperative for ethical considerations. One of the many benefits of collaboration in self-study is that it enhances the "outcomes of research for the individual, the university, and the academic discipline" (Louie et al, 2003, p. 155). Collaboration validates the work done with the presence of participants as critical friends. Offering various instances for consideration and examination of differing or countering views, collaboration helped illuminate the participants' and my settler biases, and their ongoing and active participation in the study contributed to the analysis, interpretation and presentation of my findings. Collaboration from my participants helped me avoid presenting

erroneous and/or misleading information and results, for example in the misinterpretation of memory texts and poems, as well as aided in rectifying previously held assumptions (on my part) regarding the findings that I believed I had found or hoped I would discover (Chang et al, 2003; Louie et al, 2003; Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009).

Another significant effect of collaboration in self-study, as stated previously, is discovering in dialogue with others, not only what is being said, but what is not being said and why, and further, what is 'dwelling in the spaces between' (Bullough & Pinnegar 2001; Morawski & Palulis, 2009; Watt 2012). To examine the self in collaboration brings awareness to the need to discover what lies in the space(s) between the researcher, the participants and the memories, rather than solely focusing on the self. That space in between is a fundamental space because we do not come to learn or know alone, but rather by deepening our understanding through relationships and dialogues with others:

> inquiries into our practices are influenced and informed by the space between the larger historical and institutional context and the personal local space of our classrooms; the space between our public and private lives; the space between public theory and private action; the space between what we already know about our practice and the new reading we do to understand in a particular practice; the space between our data and our interpretation of it; and the space between what we know explicitly and what our action reveals we know implicitly. (Pinnegar & Hamilton 2009, p. 14)

Discovering what lies in the spaces between us, our students, our thoughts, and our memories of Nunavik was therefore of profound importance in my study. Bringing to light what was hiding in these spaces together through revision and analysis of our memory texts and poems involved exploring the harsh binaries of the Nunavik teaching experience, such as *Qallunak*[4]/Inuit, teacher/student, outsider/insider, self/other, colonized/colonizer, settled/unsettled, and past/present (and future).

As Pinnegar and Hamilton (2009) point out, one of the reasons why education researchers perform self-study is that "it allows us to act more strategically to develop new ways of acting in relationship to the others in our practice," and in this way uncovers, transforms, or repositions our knowledge of the research question, holding promise for improvement (p. 20). The main goal of performing a self-study is learning about ourselves and our practices, and of our relationships

[4] Inuktitut word meaning a person that is not of Inuit descent

to the spaces in between in order to bring about change and improvement not just for the benefit of education research or our individual practices, but ultimately for present and future students (Louie et al, 2013; Pinnegar & Hamilton 2009). As Coia and Taylor (2009) note,

> the focus while apparently on the teacher self, is always on the student and how to create a meaningful learning environment. When this hard work is undertaken with others it can help us make sense of our experience, and lace our conversations with even more significance. (p. 15-16)

Thus, the aim of my study was not simply to discover the influences of my participants' and my memories and experiences of teaching in Nunavik, or to understand how they impact, or learn how they connect to, our current teaching practices. The purpose was also to share this knowledge with present and future teachers, administrators, and policy makers, with the goal of improving quality in education and promoting and supporting student success and well being.

Collaborative self-study reinforces my *inukshuk* framework and its four stones, as according to Whitinui, who writes on Aboriginal self-study (2013), "the four directions (i.e., decolonization, healing, transformation, and mobilization) as well as the four conditions of being (i.e., survival, recovery, development, and "self"-determination) offer some direction in how everyone can contribute to the futures of indigenous peoples" (p. 473).

The Case for Collaborative Self-Study

Performing a self-study means finding the potential "that may help to repair or heal personal hardships and challenges" (Whitinui 2013, p. 480). That being said, self-study does not come without hardships and challenges of its own. One of the primary critiques of self-study is that it provides little or no discussion about what the results add to the literature and the larger education and teaching community (Louie et al, 2003). Other recurrent critiques are that self-study is lacking in an agreed-upon definition, tends to be solipsistic, and if not done correctly, can produce erroneous or misinterpreted information, as well as not be significantly grounded in history (Louie et al, 2003; Pinnegar & Hamilton 2009; Whitinui, 2013). Although there are many different versions of the definition of self-study and various applications of it, its aims of learning and improving remain indisputably the same. In order to avoid narcissism and attain validity, self-study researchers must engage in collaboration and discussion with colleagues and critical friends, be grounded in scholarly support, as well as contain a strong historical

foundation in order to add to the existing body of knowledge, and offer novel possibilities for further investigation in the field (Greene et al, 2007; Louie et al, 2003). As discussed earlier, I designed my study diligently, paying careful attention to ensure that all of these requirements were met through the objectives of my *inukshuk* framework, and its emphasis on collaboration, support, balance and ceremony.

There are many examples of collaborative self-studies, but I would like to focus on one. Strong-Wilson's 2002-2003 study is of particular interest to me as it not only discusses eighteen teachers undergoing a collaborative self-study, but it also explores the role of the teacher-researcher in this method (Strong-Wilson, 2006a). The eighteen teachers willingly participated in a collaborative self-study in which memory, literacy and autobiography were utilized. Participants shared their memories, favourite childhood narratives and autobiographies with the group in order to learn something about their own teaching selves; namely, what the relationships are between their childhood literary memories and the texts they have chosen to use in their classrooms (Strong-Wilson, 2006a). Strong-Wilson (2006a) admits to struggling with the role of teacher-researcher in terms of designing a collaborative self-study that would consider each participants' different personal learning styles. "The design of studies with others, instead of being oriented toward the self, needs to be oriented towards others' learning and therefore become open to ways of learning alternative to the researcher's own" (Strong-Wilson, 2006a, p. 74). One important suggestion the author makes, similar to Haug (2000) and Clare and Johnson (2000), is to ensure that the participants pose their own questions elicited by their memories, rather than answering questions posed by the researcher: "using a learner-centred approach, I would need to create a context for learning and then move out of the way to allow discussion to happen" (Strong-Wilson, 2006a, p.64). Thus, as in my *inukshuk* framework, balance is the key to attaining a well-designed collective self-study; the study must be rigorously designed to guide and prompt the participants through particular memories, reflections, analyses and discussions, but must be free and open enough to encourage voluntary and individualized opportunities for learning (Strong-Wilson, 2006a).

> Teachers need opportunities to engage in self-study of their own narratives. By narratives, I mean those formative stories illustrative of constructions of self and other, and by opportunities, I mean sustained occasions in which to reflect individually and collectively. Educational researchers have a responsibility to think pedagogically about

> how to create productive situations in which such learning can take place for teachers. Productive situations are ones in which teachers come to their learning voluntarily, even if, in practice, the learning also has an involuntary aspect; teachers could not have entirely predicted or controlled the memories they recalled and the counter-memories elicited along with them. If teachers are not voluntarily involved in such work, resistance is likely; in the area of social justice education, resistance has been shown to further entrench racist attitudes and perceptions. (Strong-Wilson, 2006a, p.73)

Given that my *inukshuk* framework is informed by Indigenous research methods, racist attitudes and perceptions, especially those directed toward the Inuit people are attitudes and perceptions that will have erroneous, misleading, and uncomfortable effects on the participants and their learning. Resistance, however, is an important part of the collaborative self-study, as it can be a productive way for memory to work. When taken on voluntarily (although guided by the researcher), extrapolating and analyzing the reasons for resistance of that memory can lead to a profound discovery of knowledge, one that will have a lasting impact on the participant over time; an impact that will allow for the professional improvement of the participant – the ultimate goal of self-study (Strong-Wilson, 2006). In my collaborative self-study, the participants and I were able to discover new knowledge and make new meanings individually and collectively of our past Nunavik memories and experiences through open-ended discussions. The discussions were guided by myself as the researcher, but they were nonetheless informed, inspired and provoked by the participants' own questions, contributions, understandings and examinations of their own photographs, stories, memory texts and poems.

The Fourth Stone: Poetic Inquiry

The final stone in my methodological Inukshuk framework, *poetic inquiry*, is dependent on all the stones that have come before it. In poetic inquiry, poetry is used by researchers reflectively and/or reflexively, as well as in data analysis and presentation of results (Butler-Kisber, 2010).

> Stories and metaphor are often used in indigenous societies… stories allow listeners to draw their own conclusions and to gain life lessons from a more personal perspective. By getting away from abstractions and rules, stories allow us to see others' life experiences through our own eyes. (Wilson, 2008, p. 17)

As Wilson (2008) states above, stories are a traditional Indigenous method that allow listeners to interpret the information from new and different angles, listening particularly to the lesson that they need to hear in that moment (Battiste & Barman, 1995). The same Indigenous stories can be told to the same listeners a multitude of times, because the listeners uncover new knowledge with each new listen; that is, the listeners receive from the story the answers to the questions they are seeking in that particular moment (Battiste & Barman, 1995). In my study, the fact that the participants' memory stories were revisited multiple times by the participants themselves, and that each offered their own perspective of the story, a multitude of different lessons were learned. While these different interpretations were valuable in and of themselves, my participants and I were able to further deconstruct the texts, as poetic inquiry allowed us to find patterns of similarity, discord, and most importantly, of omittance. "Poetic transcription represents an amalgamation of both the participant's and the researcher's voices rather than the single, authorial voice of the researcher that appears in traditional work" (Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 84). These careful and close readings of stories were performed in the spirit of Indigenous methods, and the feature of collaboration provided new insights. Thus, the poetic inquiry in my study depended heavily upon self-study, which would not have been able to be achieved without memory work. This demonstrates how each method relies and is dependent on the other, much like each stone is carefully placed and balanced in an *inukshuk*.

Poetic inquiry completes the structure for my methodological framework, as it too "appeals to our senses and opens up our hearts and ears to different ways of seeing and knowing" (Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 82). Thus, the poems that were created out of the participants' memory texts in my study would not have been complete without the help of poetic inquiry to open our senses, hearts and ears to those liminal spaces discussed above. As Radstone (2000) states, doing memory work "that occupies liminal spaces demands liminal practices…situated between disciplines and deploys not just combinations of, but, more accurately, hybridized methods" (p. 13). This statement describes my methodological framework well, as it is a hybridized method employing Indigenous methods about Indigenous topics, balanced and supported by traditional story-telling, introspective learning, and collaborative sharing and creating to find new knowledge about a personal yet also communal question.

In order to create this new knowledge into poetic form, my participants and I first had to analyze our memory texts. As stated before, the participants answered four to five questions about each text and shared their answers with the group. The participants recorded the answers in order to further deconstruct and analyze their memories. When analyzing memory, "an effective method has been to start compiling lists in columns with very simple pieces of information about, for example, the actions of the narrator, actions of others, feelings, and interests" (Haug, 2000, p.168). Similarly, Lewis (2015) employed poetic inquiry to analyze the results of her transcript data in her doctoral study regarding parent immigrants and their children's French language learning. While not making columns, Lewis extracted key words and concepts from the interview transcripts of her study. Following this, Lewis used poetry as a heuristic device, using only the exact words of the participants to create poems that succinctly captured the participants' feelings towards her research questions. She further used these poems to confirm or corroborate the feelings, factors and reasons among other participants' poems, and the remainder of their transcripts. She found that the poems included "tensions and contradictions, [and] doubts... Poetry allows multiple realties to co-exist, which … minimizes the reproduction of stereotypical representation" (Lewis, 2015 p. 89). This is a crucial point for my study, as it is these tensions, contradictions and doubts that brought new knowledge forward. Furthermore, the fact that poetic inquiry minimizes the occasion for stereotyping was of grave importance, given the Indigenous context of my study.

Once our columns of words, feelings, doubts, actions, tensions, senses, etc., were generated, the second step was construction; not of the poems, but of the self. In the second stage, then, we moved on to more complex issues dealing with the construction of our selves, including our construction of others (our past Inuit students and colleagues), and the objects/events in our memory texts; questions that involved some measure of synthesizing. In the case of the initial columns stage, we entered words in our columns that occurred in our texts, while at the second stage the actual words used were to be avoided, so that there could be a higher degree of abstraction and a deeper examination of our constructs of (and of our relationships with) others (Haug, 2000, p. 168).

At this second stage, then, there was a second row of columns that was drawn. This second column delved deeper into the memory, the subconscious and the self. At this point in the inquiry, memory became a tool for analysis rather than a springboard for poetic creation. It was

during this process where what was not written on the page became apparent: “you can see the extent to which someone takes action or whether the other participants in the scene behave passively” (Haug, 2000, p. 168). As such, “the breakdown of the text into columns is simply a tool, though one that precedes the creation of an analytic, reconstructive text about the scene” (Haug, 2000, p. 168). This tool was a highly effective method of ensuring that all aspects of the memory were addressed, heard, and voiced, allowing for new knowledge and insights to come to light, insights that are imperative for the creation of a well-constructed poem based on the analysis of a well-examined memory.

Cahnmann-Taylor (2009) describes how in her own research, she returned home to study her field notes in a way similar to Haug, using poetry to “capture the essence of what was said—the feelings, contradictions, dualities, and paradoxes” (p. 22). In analyzing her data poetically, Cahnmann-Taylor also noted the importance of what was not being said, and how the poems give voices to those liminal spaces, as well as to those marginal or forgotten voices which would normally go unheard, therefore giving poems a “concise ability to give language to the unsayable” (p. 20). Prendergast (2009) has called this new voice found through collaborative poetic inquiry “vox participare” (p. xxii). These type of poems are written from interview transcripts or directly by participants, and sometimes in collaboration with the researcher (Prendergast, 2009). After sifting through the data, Prendergast (2009) also searched for words, phrases, sentences, passages that synthesize meaning: “these siftings will be generally metaphorical, narrative and affective in nature. The process is reflexive in that the researcher is interconnected with the researched, that the researcher’s own affective response to the process informs it” (p.xxiii). Thus, “poetic representations can provide the researcher/reader/listener with a different lens though which to view the same scenery, and thereby understand data, and themselves, in different and more complex ways. It is, therefore, a powerful form of analysis (Prendergast, 2009, p.xxviii).

If poetry is to have a large impact on research, those engaged in the practice must be willing to disseminate it to the larger community, which brings me back to one of the main goals of Indigenous research methods: that it reach the people who have helped create it (Cahnmann-Taylor, 2009; Smith, 1999; Whitinuui, 2013). As Cahnmann-Taylor (2009) explains,

> The burden of proof through language is one of many reasons that we cannot separate the form of writing from the content of our research: we have to show through writing that

> what we have done both builds on what has been done before and adds to it in fresh and vital ways. However, more important than the burden of proof, a focus on language and a variety of writing styles not only enhances the presentation of ideas, but also stimulates and formulates the conception of ideas themselves ... Just as the microscope and camera have allowed different ways for us to see what would otherwise be invisible, so too poetry and prose are different mediums that give rise to ways of saying what might not otherwise be expressed. (p. 16)

This statement fully encapsulates why poetic inquiry is a vital component of my study, as it enumerates the various reasons and multiple uses and benefits of it as an analytic tool, and how it also works in a holistic way, gathering all of the different elements of my methodological framework. Furthermore, the poems themselves allowed for new knowledge to be collectively produced yet individually expressed. In this way the poems offered to the participants, researcher, larger academic community, as well as Indigenous and non-Indigenous reader populations, to experience all aspects of a particular memory; a memory narrated in a form which honours the speaker's natural pauses, line breaks, repetitions, omissions, metaphors, rhythms, and so on in an accurate way (Cahnmann-Taylor, 2009; Prendergast, 2009). Finally, eliminating the academic jargon that is usually presented in the writing of research allows the poems to present results in a form that is natural to the participants, but also inherent to the communities by which it was informed, thus allowing researchers to enhance their abilities to listen and communicate "with more liveliness and accuracy when representing data to larger audiences" (Cahnmann- Taylor, 2009, p. 19). Poetic inquiry therefore allows for a much larger readership than that of a typical education research study, as it offers a more "immediate and lasting impact" (Cahnmann-Taylor, 2009, p. 25). In doing so, "a poetic approach to inquiry also understands that writing up research is a part of a critical iterative feedback loop that informs ongoing decision making in the field" (Cahnmann-Taylor, 2009, p. 19).

An Occasion for Inspiration

In this chapter I have tried to show how, like the medicine wheel paradigm used in Indigenous research methodologies, everything comes full circle. The metaphor of the *inukshuk* is one that I believe encompasses the nature of a hybrid model for methodology, as well as one that honours Inuit tradition and culture. Each part is not only inter-related and connected, but

depends on the other for balance and structure in order to form an ongoing loop of discovering, sharing, viewing, analyzing, exposing, interpreting and learning among participants, researcher, reader, listener, individual, community and all the voices and spaces in between. I have tried to show how Indigenous research methods, memory work, self-study, and poetic inquiry can be fused into a holistic entity, one in which each element is essential and necessary for the existence, balance, and support of the other.

Among the different generations of plant, animal and human life, *inuksuit* stand tall and proud amongst the frozen tundra and its harsh conditions, spreading hope and inspiration to all the different populations that they encounter. Similarly, my study aims to give a voice to those who have journeyed and continue to experience, visit, and live in their memories of teaching in Nunavik. My hope was to uncover the symbols of these memories in order to discover new knowledge of the past, and how it affects us in the present, and possibly, how it may influence our choices and paths in the future. It is my sincere wish that this study perpetuates a change in the self, one that is equipped with new knowledge from the past; knowledge that has the potential for change; knowledge that can help shape, form, and inspire present, future and post Nunavik teachers and their students. The following chapter describes in detail how I planned to achieve this wish.

Chapter Four – Walking the Path: Concrete Plans

"You can't really know where you're going until you know where you've been."
– Maya Angelou

"You can't understand where you're going if you don't know where you've been."
– Richard Wagamese

A Path With Heart

If I were to tell you that I know exactly what I am doing, that would be a lie. There have been numerous moments in this doctoral process where I've actually had no clue. In fact, as I sit here this morning at the kitchen table, watching the rain slowly trickle down the window and then begin to pour down violently, the dreary, gloomy oblivion I look out to is an exact representation of how I feel at this particular moment, lump heavy in my throat. Writing the opening lines to this chapter I am at a loss, not for words, but for where, or rather, how to begin. And so I choose honesty and laying my heart out on the line. What comforts me is that in doing so, I am choosing to share my truth. I am choosing to let my heart speak; I am choosing the path with heart. Don Juan would be pleased.

I had another dream last night. A recurring dream I have about moving back to Nunavik to teach. It is unsettling how often I have this same dream. It's unsettling because in the deepest parts of me, somehow, I always find myself surprised at the amount of emotions it stirs up; surprised at how the feelings stay with me throughout the course of the whole day – sometimes days. It takes me through an ever-entwining loop of memories, pasts, futures; of *coulds*, *shoulds*, *woulds*. And yet, through the storm there is also a kind of calm as I remember the road that lead me here. The road that I choose to travel, though sometimes bumpy and filled with diversions and blocks, is the one that in the end always points toward the light, no matter how hard it may be to see. It is finding the courage to see that becomes a work of the heart.

"The word courage comes from the French *coeur* and Latin *cor* for heart. To find and follow the path with heart requires courage and heart" (Chambers, 2004, p. 4). In *Research that matters: Finding a path with heart*, Chambers (2004) reminds me that it is at night that my heart speaks to me: "it's in these wee hours when the rest of world lies still enough [that] I can hear my heart speaking" (p.9). So I listen to my dream. I may not know exactly where I'm going, but I certainly know where I have been.

Don Juan, a Yaqui sorcerer in 1960s Mexico is credited with helping anthropologist Carlos Castaneda find a path with heart (Chambers, 2004). He advises Castaneda to try many paths and choose a path with heart because it is good and the journey will be joyful. On the contrary, a path with no heart has no use and will leave you cursed. Chambers (2004) follows Don Juan's advice in her own research, which in turn, has inspired me to follow mine. But how do I know if my path has heart? Only if the path is the one which allows my heart to speak, as: "to have a heart is to be straight and truthful in your speech and action; it is to be compassionate and generous in your words and deeds" (Chambers, 2004, p. 6). Choosing a path with heart allows the hearts of others to speak to me. It allows me to listen not only to my heart, but to all of those who have helped informed this study. This chapter offers a blueprint for how I chose to put the plan into action; it demonstrates how I walked the path. It shows that the path with heart was paved with careful listening, honesty, respect, humility, good will, trust, and most of all, love. The first part of the path is concerned with my participants – who they are, how they were selected and why. The second part illustrates the timeline for collecting the data – the number of meetings, how the methods and the tools were utilized. The third part reveals the data that was collected and how it was stored. "one of the ways we can retain our sanity on the path with heart is to cast memories as stories" (Chambers, 2004, p. 12). I will therefore begin with the story of pebbles on the beach.

Pebbles on the Beach

"As you remember and record, you pass the story, and the memory, back through the heart."
(Chambers, 2004, p. 12)

According to Chambers (2004), "one of the ways we can retain our sanity on the path with heart is to cast memories as stories" (p. 12). I will therefore begin with a story of pebbles on the beach. Pebbles come in all shapes, sizes and colours. We may walk on them, skip them, ignore them, discard them, or keep them in a collection. They can be used in sculptures, as paper weights, keepsakes and game pieces. They may even be safeguarded for holding precious qualities that may one day be valuable. Pebbles lie in sand or near water, mostly undisturbed by the trampling of feet, the rise and fall of tides, and the passing of time. And yet when someone says "you're not the only pebble on the beach", I am instantly transported to the shore of the

isolated community in Nunavik. There, on the beach of the calm blue bay, surrounded by imposing mountains, I most certainly feel like I am the only pebble.

As discussed in previous chapters, as a white teacher gone North to teach, I have returned, feeling at home neither here nor there. Nostalgia, liminality, reverse culture shock, memories of the experience live in me daily, and I struggle to not lose myself in those memories. I struggle to fit in with my culture and society. As a white teacher gone North and now returned, I struggle to find others who know and understand where I have been. I struggle with feeling as if I am the only pebble on the beach. It is very difficult to find similar pebbles: *Qallunaak* teachers who have gone North to teach, who have returned, who struggle with their present lives and selves as an effect of the experience, and who are willing to delve back into the past to talk about it. And so begins the story of the first rock in the road; the first stumbling block in my path with heart: finding participants for my study. In my mind I struggled with being the only pebble on the beach and didn't know where I was going. But I did know where I had been, and that's where my heart suggested I begin to look. Like a lantern guiding my direction, I followed my heart back to the shore. This time I saw other pebbles on the beach; not many, but they were there. I picked one up and threw it into the bay, hoping it would float. Little did I know that it would also create ripples.

Writing the story of pebbles on the beach allows me to pass the memory through my heart, ensuring that I continue along a path with heart in my description of collection of data. The first step was finding participants willing to undertake this journey with me. Without participants, there would be no collection of data – there would be no study – but most importantly, there would be no hearts to speak to mine. As described earlier, finding teachers who had lived a similar experience and were willing to discuss and examine it, was no easy task. Although I have numerous past colleagues with whom I have kept in touch, I needed to make sure that they too would walk the path with heart, otherwise, the journey, as Wilson (2008) warns, would not be good or beneficial. Thus, sending out a general call for participants was out of the question. The journey required participants who had also known and understood where they had been; who had taught in a Nunavik community for a number of years and were therefore active members of that community; teachers who continue to teach here in the South. This significantly diminished the number of past colleagues I could consider reaching out to. Furthermore, in order to ensure that participants felt safe enough to confide in myself and each

other, to work and share collaboratively, to listen and consider respectfully, to revisit and observe holistically with mind and heart, meant that the participants and myself needed to already have a close relationship of mutual trust, one that would foster and nurture an awakening of spirit, in order to perform not research but ceremony (Wilson, 2008, p. 59). This meant I find not just any pebble on a beach, but those three or four that come from the same grain of sand. This meant I needed the members of my Northern family.

Participant Selection

> *What is true about the Inukshuk is true about people. Each individual entity alone has significance. As part of a team each of us supports, and is supported by, another. We are united by our common goals, and together we are part of a greater whole.* (The Story of the Inukshuk, 2016, para. 4)

With careful consideration, I opened the Facebook application on my laptop and wrote to five individuals in private messages. Four were colleagues who had taught in the same school and community as I did for three years, and one was a mutual friend of my brother and sister-in-law who had taught in their community for two years. (My brother and his wife have been teaching in Nunavik for 10 years, having been inspired to go North two years after I did. They have not yet returned, nor do they have plans to.) I first planned to run the idea by them before sending them an official letter of consent. The private message briefly outlined the topic of my study and explained that I was at the point in my research where I needed to collect data. I informed the possible candidates that their input and participation would be invaluable to my study given their knowledge and experience in the area. I then described that their participation, should they agree, would involve getting together three different times for discussion, as well as some guided writing activities. I did not want to overwhelm them with too many details at the beginning for fear of not receiving any interest, however, I did want them to understand the amount of time and degree of involvement required should they agree to participate. I informed them that if they agreed, their involvement would remain anonymous, and ended the message with a personal note of gratitude, as well as a notice to expect an official letter of consent

I awaited their responses anxiously, and began doubting my initial message. Did I say too much? Would listing the number of meetings and divulging that there would be writing involved scare them off? Writing can be a very daunting task. Given that they were currently teaching, was I demanding too much of their time? Perhaps I should have waited for their responses until I

offered more details? No. As I waited, I comforted myself with the fact that I had done the right thing; I had listened to my heart and had chosen to be honest. Because it was so early in the process, I wanted them to be able to as an informed a decision as possible. As it turns out, 4 of the 5 possible candidates responded with a very quick and enthusiastic "yes". The fifth candidate did not respond at all, and although I was surprised, I did not push the subject any further, and comforted myself with the knowledge that I already had four very interested participants.

In the end, one of the original four candidates who had responded positively decided not to participate. During a social event, I explained the research and timeline to him with more depth, due to his great interest in the project. He wanted to know every detail and was especially interested in the poetic inquiry aspect of the study and the results it would help bring forward. Unfortunately, he phoned me the week later apologizing and explaining that he had decided not to participate after all. He and his partner had just welcomed their first-born child not long ago, and although he was very interested in the research, he did not know if he could fully commit to the timeline, and therefore didn't want to be the cause of any disruptions. Although this left both he and I saddened, I was happy and honoured that he respected the research enough to step back in order to allow for the most cohesion possible. This left us both feeling content and grateful for the openness, honesty and mutual understanding that is not only characteristic of, but integral to our Northern family.

I find it important to note that these are the reasons why the participants in my study are composed of women only; it was not a conscious decision, but rather a coincidental outcome based on availability and interest. As a result, I formed a solid group of four participants who had taught in Nunavik for a number of years and who continue to teach in Southern Quebec: three participants plus myself as an active participant-researcher. Four participants performing memory work, collaborative self-study and poetic inquiry seemed to me to be a very suitable and viable number, as too many would have meant an enormous amount of data that could become overwhelming and take away from the intimacy of the group, and as such, possibly interfere with the depth of the conversations, the richness of the data and perhaps, the scope of the study. Moreover, the fact that my participants and I were all women of similar age, ethnic origin and educational background, allowed the opportunity for safe sharing of our thoughts and feelings based on mutual trust and understanding. The reciprocal relationship we held was informed by our similar experiences as women, as beginner teachers, and as *Qallunaat* returnees, which

allowed us to express our memories with honesty, and gave us the courage to acknowledge and learn together from our own and each other's settler histories and perspectives.

As Strong-Wilson, Yoder, Aitken, Chang-Kredl, & Radford (2020) write, the participants and I "gathered as pilgrims" united by common ground, in sharing our tales of the past (p. 8). We confided in each other in the unsettling of our settler stories, propelling each other to dig deeper, the way that only we, a small, close-knit group of post-Nunavik *Qallunaat* women and teachers with similar experiences and perspectives, could. The fact that we were colleagues, friends, and Northern family members, allowed us to share, listen, remember, understand, respect, support and encourage each other; principles that are necessary for conducting good research and that would be beneficial to all involved (Wilson, 2008). Helping each other through the journey as pilgrims gave us each the courage to see and the strength to walk together in an effort to reach towards an answer to the research question. As Strong-Wilson et al. (2020) write:

> We gathered as sojourners: itinerants enjoying the solace of one another's company along the way—along life's way. We were not a committee struck for an institutional purpose, nor a cross-university collaboration oriented towards garnering funds or sharing results. Our gathering involved encountering one another "first hand" and in person, feeling one another's "physical presence," implicitly attuned, as colleagues and friends, to verbal and non-verbal cues (Pinar, 2011, p. 14). We read, we discussed, we wrote, we shared what we wrote, we assembled our writings and invited one another to respond. Through writing, reading and conversation, we were called back to memories of the past that hovered over the present. (p. 9)

As pilgrims, friends and sojourners, we supported each other in helping to find and name the ghosts embedded in our stories, and together, we excavated and unmasked our similarities as settlers (Grumet, 1981; Hampl, 1999; Strong et al, 2020). As pilgrims sojourning down the path with heart, we participated in a different kind of listening; a ceremony that uncovered the voices of our past Inuit students and colleagues (Regan, 2010; Strong-Wilson et al, 2020; Wilson, 2008). "The compulsion to make that pilgrimage, difficult as the journey sometimes was, suggests that something important was trying to work its way through into thought and expression" (Strong et al, 2020, p. 9). It was a journey that transformed our path towards reconciliation, a journey that illuminated how our past continues in a decolonizing direction towards the future (Pinar, 2012; Regan, 2010). Enlightened by our minds, ears, eyes, and hearts

that were awakened through the story-sharing journey, "the pilgrimage was to some place that was simultaneously physical, spiritual, emotional and intellectual," (Strong et al, 2020, p.9). Our past experiences, though individual, depended, supported, balanced and informed our collective journey, like the stones in an *inukshuk*: inseparable, united, balanced, and necessary. Together, we did not participate in research; we performed a ceremony that brought our hearts and minds and those of our Inuit students and colleagues together, out from the past, into the present, and towards the future.

As I write and breathe these words, the research speaks to me again: is it a coincidence that there are four stones in my *inukshuk* methodology model? Is it by chance that there were four participants in my study? I close my eyes and listen to my heart. I listen to their hearts. I smile. No. It is definitely more. \0/

I next introduce (in brief) the stories of Sara, Melissa and Nathalie: the other pebbles on the beach.[5] These stories provide a background context for the data analysis to follow, and are based on memories expressed throughout the inquiry by the participants themselves.[6]

Sara's Story

Sara came to the Nunavik community that I lived and taught in one year after I did. I remember our first meeting with fondness. She was anxious to see the village that she would later call her home, and she was nervous to meet the local townspeople and the new group of teachers that would soon become her friends and colleagues. She was excited to meet the Inuit children who would soon become her students. She was embarking on a journey that she had always wanted to take. Ever since she was little, her father told her stories of the North, having worked in Nunavik for numerous years. He would show her pictures, tell her stories, and bring her souvenirs from what seemed to Sara to be a snow-filled wonderland, a secret that only he and she shared. Ever since then, she knew that she wanted to go North. And so, as time went on and Sara grew, life would have it that she found her passion in teaching, but she never forgot the

[5] Participants' names have been changed. Pseudonyms are used to ensure anonymity.

[6] Participants authorized the use of these stories as narrated in this thesis.

stories of the North, which continued to whisper and echo in her heart. And so, Sara decided to teach in Nunavik. She answered the call to experience the North through her own eyes, so that she would have her own stories to tell, and so that she could pass them down to her own children one day.

Sara's teaching task in the community allowed her to build strong relationships with every student and teacher in the school, as she taught physical education to each level in both the elementary and secondary programs. Her openness, generosity, compassion and innate love for her Inuit students and colleagues allowed her to remain strong, despite some very difficult personal battles. Sara's creativity inspired everyone around her, including Inuit students and teachers who felt compelled to share and practice their artistic and cultural knowledge, traditions, and interests with her. Her dedication to her students and gentle mannerisms were a reflection of her peaceful spirit and constant desire to learn. She would regularly go for runs in the tundra and children would join her, running, sharing, and laughing happily together. She would knit, read, write, and publish. She would eat oranges in a bowl and Nutella by the spoonful, directly from the jar. She is one of the most caring people and selfless teachers I have ever met.

Sara left Nunavik at the same time I did, three years after living and teaching together. It was a difficult decision for her, as she loved the village, the townspeople, her colleagues and her students deeply. She misses her Northern home and family, and includes them in her daily life, as they continue to speak and inspire her. Sara currently teaches dramatic arts in a specialised school for children with severe physical and mental disabilities in Montreal. She still reads, writes and publishes, and as far as I know, still eats Nutella straight from the jar. She still tells stories, and soon, she will be able to tell her own tales of the North to her young daughter. Sara was my colleague and is my friend. She is a part of my Northern family, and together, we listened to each other's stories and learned from our past Inuit students and colleagues.

Melissa's Story

Like Sara, Melissa was part of the new group of teachers that arrived to the small Nunavik community a year after I did. Melissa was excited for a new beginning, and much like myself, was eager to begin her teaching career and new life filled with the joys, freedoms and challenges of independence. Melissa came to the North alone, and although admits to being nervous and perhaps a little scared, as we all are when we make life-altering changes, she

certainly never showed it. She was full of confidence and positivity, and didn't say no to any new task or trial. In fact, she embraced every moment, good and bad, with calmness and reflection. I remember her being the first to offer help in any situation, but, come to think of it, I cannot remember one instance where she asked for help for herself.

Melissa's task in the community was to teach French and social studies to students in the secondary French program in our school. As such, we shared a lot of resources and ideas, as I taught the same subjects to the students in the English secondary program. We developed a very close relationship as we were classroom neighbours and adhered strictly to our open door policy. This policy that started off professionally soon made its way into our personal lives, as having moved next door to me in her second year, we shared a duplex with an adjoining door in the basement. It was a door that was purposely always kept unlocked, so that we could easily enter each other's homes without having to exit. Our late night and early morning wanderings through this revolving door hold some of our precious Northern memories.

Melissa was there whenever anybody needed her. She was there to lend a hand or two, even if that meant that she would have none left for herself. Melissa hosted dinners and potlucks. She made the most delicious dishes and heavenly desserts. Melissa would wear silly wigs and make tasty treats for Halloween, because she enjoyed to see the children smile. She would bake personalized cakes for her students' birthdays, because she wanted them to feel happy. She would lend her skidoo to Inuit hunters so that their families would not go hungry.

Melissa did not leave Nunavik at the same time that Sara and the rest of our Northern family did. Melissa stayed for two more years, experiencing what would become one of the most terrifying and heart-breaking events to happen in her private life. Melissa did not leave the community, not even after that. The violent break-in and assault did not change the love she felt for her Northern home and students. Following those two years, Melissa taught in an Atikamekw community in North Western Quebec for two years. After that experience, she returned to Nunavik to teach in a different community for a final year.

Melissa currently teaches secondary geography, history and citizenship in a French high school in Ste-Hyacinthe. She still cooks and bakes. Melissa still helps and still says yes (as evidenced by her participation in this study). She is bravery, resilience, and selflessness. Melissa is forgiveness. She is strength and courage. She was my colleague and is my friend. She is a part

of my Northern family, and together, we listened to each other's stories and learned from our past Inuit students and colleagues.[7]

Nathalie's Story

Nathalie did not teach in the same Nunavik community as Melissa, Sara and I did, but she did teach for two years with my brother and sister-in-law in the community that they live and teach in. Similar to Melissa and myself, Nathalie began her teaching career in Nunavik. It had been a dream of Nathalie's to teach in Nunavik. Being an avid nature enthusiast, she had wanted to see the frozen landscapes and majestic wildlife of the North; she longed to experience the natural beauty of a place that is significantly less harmed by pollution and as close as possible to a time when nature was in its true state, virtually untouched by the greed and recklessness of human enterprise. Nathalie went North alone, leaving her boyfriend behind in Montreal. She had originally decided to teach in Nunavik for only one year, in order to gain some professional teaching experience, while at the same time take the opportunity to cross off a very personally significant milestone from her bucket-list. Nathalie enjoyed her experience and loved her Northern home and family so much, however, that when the time came to move back to Montreal, she made the decision to stay in Nunavik for another year.

Nathalie's task in the community was to teach grade five in the school's French elementary program. Nathalie's inquisitive nature, as well as her love for learning, and her constant self-reflection meant that she put her students' needs before her own. She would spend countless hours creating lessons and building materials that satisfied her own as well as piqued her students' curiosity on any given subject. A deep thinker and intuitive listener, Nathalie knew when to offer advice to colleagues, friends and students. She knew how to motivate her students to keep being positive and encourage them to be their best selves. In the multiple occasions that I conversed with Nathalie during get togethers at my brother's house, I could feel our souls align.

Nathalie enjoyed playing board games. She was learning Spanish. She too called her Inuit students and colleagues her family. She hosted potlucks and themed get-togethers and earnestly listed the things she was most grateful for every Friday night. She was open and interested in learning about the Inuit culture and traditions. Despite not having lived or taught in the same

[7] It is with deep sadness that I share that since the writing of this thesis, Melissa passed away on Dec. 28, 2019.

community, due to shared experiences and similar interests, and our deep conversations throughout the years, I can state that Nathalie is one of the most inspired and inspiring teachers I have met.

After two years in Nunavik, Nathalie returned to southern Quebec. She is currently teaching grade two in an inner city school in Montreal. She and her boyfriend have recently welcomed their first born child. Nathalie still lists what she is grateful for at the end of a long work week, and she is still learning Spanish. Nathalie still goes for long walks and hikes, and she is introducing her love for the outdoors and respect for animals and nature to her young daughter. Nathalie is observant, gentle, caring and kind. She embodies patience, spirituality and hope. She was my brother's colleague and is my friend. She is a part of my Northern family, and together, we listened to each other's stories and learned from our past Inuit students and colleagues.

Creating a Safe Space

> *Each individual in a team is necessary for the realization of the team's purpose. The removal of even one person will result in the weakening of the structure. What holds the team together is the balance - the complementary nature of the individual skills.* (The Story of the Inukshuk, 2016, para. 4)

In the above section I shared the stories of my participants, of three of the members of my Northern family. They are the stories of three women who travelled to teach in Nunavik, but who, like myself, have learned infinitely more. We have returned with an invaluable amount of memories and knowledge, and despite many personal and professional stumbling blocks and challenges along the way, our passion for learning and the love we share for our students allows us to see beyond the rocks in the road. Our paths were then and are now inexorably and inextricably linked. Although we are different and unique in many ways, together, we are the pebbles on the beach that come from the same grain of sand. Having confirmed participation, we embarked on a journey of discovery. Together, we listened, learned and grew. Together, we carved a new path in an unknown landscape. As pilgrims down the path with heart, we navigated different knowledges and negotiated new meanings of our old tales. Together, we unsettled, re-storied and reconstructed our past in the present towards the future.

As Narcisse Blood states in the opening greeting to Hasebe-Ludt, Chambers, and Leggo's 2009 book, *Life Writing and Literary Metissage as an Ethos for Our Times*, "it takes courage to

write from life experience" (p. xvi). In order to find the courage to write intimately about a subject that requires delving deeply into the past and into the self, it was of extreme importance to me that my participants "feel safe and be safe, including respecting issues of confidentiality" (Wilson, 2008, p. 59). Because we were all very close friends and were united by our shared Northern experiences, we already respected and trusted each other to a degree which included "a reflective non-judgmental consideration of what [was] being seen and heard" (Wilson, 2008, p. 59). To further ensure the safety and confidentiality of my participants, I eliminated identifying pieces of information, for example in the memory texts and/or transcriptions of the audio-recordings of our discussions. This information will not be made public, and neither will any of the subjects (for example specific students, communities or other teachers) that may have featured in the photographs or that surfaced in our texts and discussions. The participants were made aware that because our self-study is confidential in nature, should a participant wish or need to leave the study, the option to destroy their data would be offered and decided upon at their discretion. The safety, confidentiality and anonymity of all participants and subjects was also ensured by hosting the discussions in the privacy of my home rather than a public setting. Furthermore, the comfort of my home provided a safe and welcoming space that encouraged honest and active participation, as well as minimized distractions, influences, timidness and intimidation that could arise in a public venue or university institution (Tanaka, 2016).

According to Butler-Kisber (2010), seeking access ("the reciprocal process of informed consent") through friends requires a delicate balance to

> be able to inspire interest and even excitement in the research without having to promise the impossible. The researcher has to be able to show that there are reciprocal benefits to be gained, and that she is legitimate and credible in her work. (p. 19)

While I was unable to provide financial compensation for their participation in my study, I informed my participants that the expected value or benefit of their involvement would include various personal and professional opportunities for growth in areas such as: determining the influences and impacts of our Northern experiences in order to discover what was gained from them; examining how these influences and impacts translate to our present teaching methods, styles and skills; acknowledging our pre and post Northern identities and settler perspectives; identifying strategies for collaboration and design of culturally appropriate curricula inclusive of Indigenous perspectives, exploring how our findings could support future teachers going North

and *Qallunaat* teachers returning to the South; and gaining overall professional and personal improvement and development. As I outlined these expected outcomes, my participants expressed their interest and excitement in the study by offering other possible values and benefits, as well as thanked and congratulated me for designing what they thought was a clear, rigorous and well-informed research proposal and design. The encouragement and support I received from my participants was a factor that contributed to my ongoing motivation in what at times seemed to me to be an immense undertaking and impossible feat. Their continued honesty, transparency and dialogue even after their role as participants helped shape and mold this study, transforming it from what began as a research inquiry into a decolonizing act and a devout expression of love, outcomes that would have been impossible without our mutual trust in each other, and profound dedication to our past, present and future students.

The effects of nostalgia and of delving into our past, though, can sometimes elicit the raw emotion that comes with exposing the self. Hasebe-Ludt, Chambers and Leggo (2009) advise that in such cases, "each of us has to be open to learn about others without prejudice and with trust in a mutual intent to do no harm" and that "it is a task that is best done communally" (p. 69). As Tanaka (2016) relates, "dwelling in a sense of well-being and safety within a learning environment does not necessarily ensure comfort. At times, the process of walking alongside each other [could be] very awkward and uncomfortable" (p. 144). The trust, support and ease which my participants brought to the meetings, however, "set the tone for acceptance of emotional expression" and as the study progressed, the participants and I "relaxed into the comfort of sharing this way" (Tanaka, 2016, p. 143). Thus, although some tears were shed (primarily during the first meeting as it was the first intense re-visiting of memories) many more laughs, hugs, jokes, and recipes were shared. In fact, with the help and support of all the participants, much new knowledge was gained that allowed the space for some old wounds to heal and brought a therapeutic feeling to our discussions, a result which I will discuss in following chapters. Furthermore, in keeping with Indigenous ways of thinking, knowing and doing, we were instinctively inspired to acknowledge, accept, and awaken to "emotional, spiritual and physical knowing" that "increased [our] confidence in accessing these non-intellectual knowledge resources. This in turn expanded [our] reflexivity on a deeper, more embodied level" (Tanaka, 2016, p. 146). Thus, while participating in this research as pilgrims performing a spiritual ceremony, my participants and I walked the path with heart together,

accepting, supporting and acknowledging each other's journeys along the way. Our journeys were indeed good and joyful, and they were ultimately beneficial to us all.

Pebbles on the Beach II: Data Collection

> *The Inukshuk are a symbol of the human spirit. They recognize our ability to succeed with others, where we would fail alone. They remind us of our need to belong to something greater than ourselves. They reinforce our ability to commit to common goals.* (The Story of the Inukshuk, 2016, para. 5)

With my informed participants confirmed and approval from the McGill University Research Ethics Board, the plan for my study was ready to be put in motion. In my application for approval, I had designed a projected timeline (see Table 1 below) for the collection of data. Based on my theoretical and methodological frameworks discussed in chapters 2 and 3, the collection of data took place over a period of three meetings. The timeline that I proposed was accepted and carried out with minor adjustments, which I discuss in the following section.

Table 1: Overview of the Inquiry Process

Timeline	**Steps**
Day 1	1. Sharing and discussing photographs 2. Generating of questions for memory text analysis 3. Writing of memory text (draft 1) 4. Sharing of texts and answering questions 5. Memory work using photographs 6. Re-writing of memory text (draft 2)
Day 2	1. Sharing of revised memory text (draft 2) and answering questions 2. Creation of word column 1 (with words from memory text 2) 3. Creation of word column 2 (without words from memory text 2) 4. Creation of poem (with words from word columns 1 and 2)
Day 3	1. Sharing of poems 2. Discussion about poems including similarities, differences, omissions 3. Discussion about how the poems represent a picture of our teaching experience in the North; what we have learned from the experience; how it influences our current teaching practices, and what we have learned from the collaborative self-study via memory work, narrative, and poetic inquiry as a whole

Day 1: Initial discussion and first draft

In the first meeting which took place on September 30, 2017, the participants and I brought 3-4 photographs that we felt were significant representations of our Northern teaching experiences as prompts. After about an hour of exchanging pleasantries and catching up, we read and signed the official letters of consent, allowing ample time for the participants to ask any further questions (see Appendix A for a copy of the Consent Form). With the letters signed, having kept a copy for themselves, the participants and I shared and discussed our photographs. We then wrote the first draft of our narratives according to the protocol for writing memory texts suggested by Mitchell and Weber (2014), which I outlined in chapter 3 (see Appendix B for a copy of the Protocol for Writing Memory Texts). As projected, this took approximately one hour. Following the writing of our first drafts, each participant read their memory text to the group and was then asked four to five questions generated by the participants (Haug, 2000; Clare & Johnson, 2000). Answers were recorded on a question sheet that I provided (see Appendix C for a copy of the Questions for Analyzing Memory Texts). The types of questions asked were inspired by Mitchell and Weber's (2014) protocol for deconstruction and analysis (see Chapter 3). This took approximately another hour. The participants were then asked to write a second draft of the memory text. Before writing the second draft, participants were asked to revisit their photographs and follow the protocol suggested by Mitchell and Reid-Walsh (2002) for using photographs as prompts for memory work (see Appendix D for a copy of the Protocol for using Photographs as Memory Prompts).

After having responded and recorded the answers to the questions of their first drafts, and of their memory work on the photographs, the aim of the second draft was to provide corrections, revisions and insights (Hampl, 1999). This would take approximately one more hour. Given that the length of our discussion was already reaching the three hour mark, instead of asking the participants to write their second drafts immediately, I asked the participants if they would prefer to write the second draft on their own time, to which they unanimously agreed. As such, we agreed to share and discuss our second drafts at the beginning of our second meeting. The participants were happy and confident that they would be able to write a better second draft at their own pace, rather than be rushed by time constraints and surely influenced by what was starting to become fatigue and a need to get back to their lives and families. I didn't want to keep

them, so we agreed to reconvene as soon as possible on a date that was compatible for all four of us.

Although the first discussion went on much longer than I anticipated (a total of 2 hours and 57 minutes), the participants did not complain, seem overwhelmed, or regretful of their decisions to participate. On the contrary, the discussion had been so rich and deep, that the participants were grateful and thanked me for the opportunity to take part in such highly intellectual conversations about such significant moments of their lives, moments that they had trouble discussing with their families and friends. Try as they might, those that haven't gone North didn't and couldn't understand the nuances and complexities of living and teaching in Nunavik. I was deeply moved by their level of involvement and interest in my study, humbled by their volition and commitment, but mostly, I was taken aback by the amount of importance and urgency they approached the task with. It had never been a question if these were the right participants for my study, but their dedication and determination to work so diligently and with such care and feeling confirmed that these were not just any ordinary participants.

I couldn't wait to see what would unravel in the next part, and as we anxiously selected the date for our second meeting, they too were excited for the journey that lay ahead. It took me a few days to come down from the high of the resounding success of this first day of inquiry, a high that the other participants also expressed to me and each other in our private Facebook group during the days that followed.[8]

The data that was collected was recorded and securely stored in my home. The participants' written drafts and question sheets were kept by the participants. I kept the original audio-recording of the discussion in my iPhone and a copy in my personal laptop, as well as in my external hard drive. I later transcribed the audio-recording of the discussion and kept the original transcription and my first memory draft in my laptop and a copy in my external hard drive. I also kept a researcher journal in which I recorded any field notes, observations, further questions or reflections about the discussion that I wanted to track. I kept the signed letters of

[8] I had set up a private research discussion group where my participants and I could ask and answer each other's questions regarding any and all aspects of the study. We often used this Facebook messenger group as a tool for communication and clarification, as it was an easy way to reach all members simultaneously, ensuring that no participant would miss any information. An interesting result of this tool is that the participants soon began answering each other's questions, and offering each other support in the writing process, an outcome that demonstrates the level of trust and degree of transparency that is not only characteristic of our Northern family, but was crucial for this study.

consent and my personal question sheet in my researcher journal, which was stored in a filing cabinet in my home with a lock and key. In order to access the files on my iPhone, laptop and external hard drive, one would need to know the passwords to such devices, therefore strongly securing the data, as no one is privy to that information.

Day 2: Second discussion and poetic inquiry

As discussed, we reconvened on October 21, 2017, the soonest possible date for our journey to continue. Melissa had travelled to my home in Laval from Ste-Hyacinthe for the first meeting, but from now on would be joining our meetings via Skype. On this second day of discussion and inquiry, the participants and I read our second drafts to the group, and again answered the questions suggested by Mitchell and Weber (2014) for deconstruction and analysis of memory texts. This took approximately one hour.

After having read our second drafts and answered the questions from the group, the participants and I then began the poetic inquiry portion of the study. The participants and I took note of our answers to the questions generated by the group and began to analyze our texts by constructing columns of words (Haug, 2000). The photographic memory prompt changed at this stage from springboard for discussion to tool for analysis. The participants and I grouped words used in our memory texts into columns of feelings, actions, doubts, tensions, senses, etc. Once this had been done, the participants and I constructed a second row of columns. In this second row, the words used in the texts were to be avoided for a higher degree of abstraction to occur, so that the we could acquire a stronger understanding of ourselves (Haug, 2000). This would take another hour. Using our word lists, the participants and I would then construct a poem about our experience teaching in Nunavik.

At this point, I gave the participants the opportunity to decide whether they would like to write the poems directly after producing the word lists, or prefer to write them on their own time. The participants again preferred to write on their own time, so as not to rush the writing process. We then ended the discussion by finalizing the date for our third and final meeting, where we would share our poems, reflections and final thoughts of our collective journey from start to end. As with the first meeting, the second discussion was recorded and securely stored in my iPhone, laptop and external hard drive. The transcription of the audio-recording was also stored in my laptop and external hard drive. The word lists and poems were kept by the participants except for

my own, which I kept in my researcher journal. As during the first meeting, I kept track of any notes, observations, questions, reflections, points of interest, etc., in my researcher journal, which was stored in the same file cabinet in my home under lock and key.

Day 3: Sharing of poems and concluding discussion

The third and final day of inquiry took place on November 11, 2017. On the final day of this collaborative self-study, the participants were asked to read their poems to the group. As the poems were the final product of the data collection, the participants would not be required to generate any further questions for analysis or deconstruction. This final discussion, rather, was the culmination of three days of collective remembering, writing, thinking and sharing. On this final day the participants and I held an open-ended discussion about the entire collaborative self-study. We discussed what insights were made through the writing of our memory texts, and to what extent the words in our poems are present in our current teaching practices. Listening to the words in the poems selected by the participants, we were able to track recurring themes and pinpoint specific feelings, actions, senses, lessons, etc. that we feel we learned in Nunavik, and how they continue to inform our practices now in the South. As with the first two, the final discussion was recorded and securely stored in my iPhone, laptop and external hard drive. The poems were kept by the participants, and I was emailed copies which were kept (along with my own poem) in my laptop and external hard drive. I also kept a researcher journal during the discussion and it was stored in the filing cabinet in my home.

This final discussion lasted an astounding 4 hours and 48 seconds. We not only discussed our poems and reflected on our participation in the study, but we also tried to navigate our thoughts and feelings about recurring burning questions that kept resurfacing on each day of the inquiry. These burning issues included decolonization of curricula, student needs, educational policies and philosophies, social justice, and our places in the education system in both Nunavik and Southern Quebec. Furthermore, we also discussed how participating in this study fostered and awakened deep realizations about the self, both professionally and personally, as well as had an unexpected effect of nurturing and creating a strong pride and confidence in writing on behalf of the participants. Finally, the participants expressed a deep desire to return to these questions one year later to see if and how their thoughts and feelings had grown or changed, and to further determine what possible influences and impacts participating in the study itself could have on

their teaching practice. The idea to return to the study after a year of reflection was put forth by the participants themselves, and I agreed that the possibility for additional findings was significant, so we ended the meeting by agreeing to return to the inquiry one year later.

An Occasion for Celebration

The idea had not crossed my mind, and I was amazed at the inventiveness, as well as the novel prospects and opportunities for further discovery that revisiting this inquiry a year later could possibly contain. I was also excited for a family reunion in which revisiting our memories, poems, questions and experiences could offer a very important occasion for member checking and verifying the validity and accuracy of the data and results.

As surprised and content as I was, however, I was even more humbled and honoured to learn how invested Sara, Melissa and Nathalie had become in my research, that they would offer to extend and expand their involvement in the study, not only for their own personal interests, but for the overall benefit of my study. This confirmed that there were other *Qallunaat* teachers that had gone to Nunavik to teach, who were just as curious as I was to discover how our Northern experiences influence our current teaching practices in Southern Quebec. This validated that there was a need for my study. Moreover, this meant that there would be a larger purpose beyond my personal interest, and a greater audience beyond those in my inner circle. This meant that my heart had indeed spoken to others, and in turn, that theirs had spoken to mine, and that together, we could listen and speak to other hearts. Best of all, this meant that the path with heart was not over and did not end here. It meant that although there were many moments throughout my doctoral research process where I doubted myself and felt overwhelmed or unable to continue, there would be other hearts to help me through, around, and over the rocks in the road.

In this chapter I have tried to demonstrate how I designed and planned my study, from participant selection to collection and storage of data, all while keeping the tenets of Indigenous research methodologies as guiding principles throughout. From its inception, the plan was created to allow the heart to follow its path in order to do research that matters that is good and beneficial for everyone involved (Chambers, 2004; Wilson, 2008). Along the path I attempted to create a safe space for listening, sharing and learning. The path, space and spirit of the journey aligned and unified our hearts, fostering the interest and nurturing the investment of my

participants to unimaginable heights in our collective quest. Performing ceremony as pilgrims allowed the data collected to be richer and deeper than I could have wished, illuminating and enlightening this study with spirit, heart, and promise far beyond the boundaries of my mind. In the following chapter I present the data and discuss the results of these first three days of inquiry.

Chapter Five – Stepping Stones: The Data

As different and unique as each individual narrative is, the interconnectedness and interdependencies among the narratives are a crucial factor in this creation, akin to what happens in an indigenous storytelling circle where each story needs the other one in the circle, where 'visiting' with each other is an important part of the circle in making the stories come alive. (Hasebe-Ludt, Chambers & Leggo, 2009, p. 10-11)

The (He)art of Storytelling

Storytelling is an art. As long as there have been humans, there have been stories. Carved in ancient caves, told around campfires, depicted in paintings, written in books or produced into films, stories hold the power to transcend time and transform listeners. Stories teach lessons. They may serve as histories, being passed down through generations. They may serve as warnings, they may hold secrets, they may inspire and challenge us to learn and grow. They may ask us to suspend belief or perhaps confirm belief. They may remind us where we come from. They help us bond and come together. They may calm us and send us happily off to sleep. Stories are spiritual. And sometimes, stories can heal. Whatever their purpose, stories hold a power, and story telling allows us to speak from the heart. Storytelling allows other hearts to listen.

The power of stories helps people "think, feel, and be" (Archibald, 2008, p. ix). Using the power of stories to tell our memories of living and teaching in Nunavik allowed my participants and I to dig deeper, to fully excavate the meanings and lessons of our memories, all the while keeping with the Indigenous tradition of storytelling (Grumet, 1981). Telling and listening to our stories rather than answering surveys, questionnaires, or set interview questions characteristic of a more conventional study, allowed us to engage, listen, synthesize, analyze, and understand the "whole story" (Bruner, 1986.) Numbers can not fully relate the complexities of human experience the way that narratives can "provide ways of holding meaning together in more complex, relational, and therefore more nuanced ways" (Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 64). Sharing in great detail the complexities and nuances of our teaching experiences in Nunavik through story allowed my participants and I to "extend beyond the limiting constraints of discursive communication in order to express meaning that otherwise would be ineffable" (Barone & Eisner, 2012, p. 1). In this way, my participants and I not only listened, but felt each other's

stories, and as Barone and Eisner (2012) state, "such empathy is a necessary condition for deep forms of meaning in human life" (p. 3).

Thus, as my participants and I shared and visited each other's stories, we listened with more than just the ears; we listened with our hearts. According to Archibald (2008) in *Indigenous Storywork: Educating the Heart, Mind, Body and Spirit*:

> Patience and trust are essential for preparing to listen to stories. Listening involves more than just using the auditory sense. We must visualize the characters and their actions. We must let our emotions surface. As the Elders say, it is important to listen with "three ears: two on the sides of our head and the one that is in our heart. (p. 8)

We must be open to receiving the gifts that come from stories, and we must use our hearts to do so. Listening with 'three ears' is therefore an essential part of walking the path with heart, and of performing ceremony – of continuing the good and beneficial journey. In telling our stories, my participants and I adhered to the seven principles related to using stories and storytelling for educational purposes that Archibald (2008) terms as storywork: "respect, responsibility, reciprocity, reverence, holism, interrelatedness, and synergy" (p. ix). Just as the stones in an *inukshuk*, just as the four directions, just as the four participants in this study, the stories we shared balanced, supported, interconnected and were necessary for each other, but also for the whole.

Memory Texts, Columns and Poems

For the participants and I, the path with heart lead us back to a time and place where we lived, taught, and were active members of Nunavik communities; back to a time and place where we learned from our Inuit students and shared with our Inuit colleagues and neighbours. As described in the previous chapter, the journey required a rigorous plan and participants willing, courageous, brave and committed to travelling along the path with heart. Each step allowed us to acknowledge and understand how we grew from the lessons we learned there, and like stepping stones, how those lessons continue to reverberate, inform, influence, impact and inspire us here.

Along the path, we visited with our past Inuit students and colleagues and remembered significant personal and professional events. Exploring these cornerstones of our Nunavik teaching experiences helped us make new encounters in our memory texts, columns and poems. Walking along the path with heart together allowed these encounters to lead us to discoveries

and new knowledge that made us understand who we were and who we have become. Walking along the path with heart together allowed us to understand why we live, think, know, and do, the way we do. We owe all we know and all we are to Nunavik, and for this we give thanks. In the following section I present the data collected in the first three days of inquiry, the data that, like stepping stones in our path with heart, inspired us to keep walking.

Step 1: Photos, Researcher Journal, Transcripts and Memory Text Draft 1

The first step in this journey of self-discovery was to prompt our memories. On the first day of inquiry, the data collected consists of photographs, researcher journal notes, and an audio-recording of our discussion. I later transcribed the audio-recording, and the format I use for referencing and/or quoting directly from the transcripts is as follows: disc1p.1 for discussion 1 page 1; disc2p.2 for discussion 2 page 2; and disc3p.3 for discussion 3 page 3. The format I use for referencing or quoting from my researcher journal is: rjp.1 for researcher journal page 1.

As described in Chapter Four, the participants and I each took turns discussing 3-4 photos that we had brought of our experiences in Nunavik. These photographs served as a springboard for discussion and later, as a prompt for writing and revising the first drafts of our memory texts. I have included a photo (below) shared by Melissa as an example. The photo is of a landscape and is the only photo shared that does not depict any persons (students, colleagues, townspeople). This is the photo that inspired Melissa to write her memory text:

Example Photo 1:

Although I had mentioned in the previous chapter that the participants kept their photos, texts, word columns and poems, the participants decided to share these with me by emailing them to me after our third day of discussion. Most participants did not include the first drafts of their memory texts or their photos, and only included the second drafts of their memory texts along with their word columns and poems (except for Melissa who shared her photo but not her word columns). I stored the copies of this data in my laptop and external hard drive, securing with passwords.

After sharing the photographs, the participants and I read and discussed the Protocol for Writing Memory Texts (Appendix B). We went through each item together, ensuring that the participants understood and were comfortable following the protocol. We then wrote the first drafts of our memory text. I have shared (below) the first draft of my memory text as an example:

Example Memory Text 1:

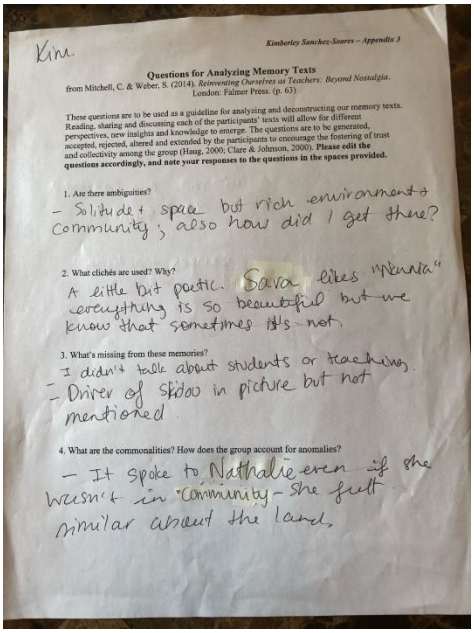
Kimberley's Memory Text 1: Draft 1

She is a smiling white teacher wearing a brown winter jacket, one made in the South, not the Inuit parka that she owns. She is wearing her brown jacket because it is Spring and it is not so cold anymore. She is standing with her arms around two small Inuit girls, one on the left and one on the right. Two other Inuit girls stand next to the one on the right. They are all smiling big happy smiles. The girls are between the ages of 6 and 10. Two of the girls are wearing winter jackets bought from the South, and two are wearing traditional Inuit parkas made by their mothers or some other female family member. They are a colourful group, the patterns on each of their coats are geometric: squares or straight lines. The colours are dark and light blues, pink, white and brown. The teacher is wearing a brown knit hat with white bunnies, a light blue trim and blue pompoms. Out of the 4 Inuit girls, one is wearing the same style of knit and pom woolen hat in brown and purple/burgundy, while the two others wear pink and blue tuques, and the one to the far left wears no hat. They are out on the land for the Spring camping day, a yearly activity run by the school. The group is at the forefront of the composition, with the land in the background. The tundra is still cold, but not frozen; it is brown and earthy; a sign of Spring peeking out beneath the cold winter white snow. Behind them in the distance a black pick-up truck is parked, and further in the distance a mountain climbs high into the white sky. In the upper left corner there are students and another white teacher who are scattered about, walking around the land in various shades of winter coats and snowsuits. It was a beautiful day, and excitement was in the air. The smiling Inuit girls' almond eyes look like nothing more than black slits. They are not her students, but they are elementary students at the school she teaches at. Even though they do not speak the same language, they understand each other on this day. Out on the land, sharing in country food, they are one and the same despite all of their differences. The smell of bannock cooking on a fire, of tea being poured, of hot dogs being boiled enters the

noses of all, and all are hungry. Hungry for food, but also hungry for fun. The students and teachers play a variety of different games. Some older girls help the elder women pluck ptarmigan that will be boiled for soup. Kites are flying up ahead. Students, teachers, community members of all ages, all together on the land, sharing food, warmth and conversation. Everyone is laughing. Kids are running. Teachers are fishing and students are watching, and on occasion, laughing at them. There is chaos but we are all wild and free. We are all a large extended family. No one is left out. Everyone is important. There is excitement in the air to go home soon, for school to be finished, to go back South for the summer, but there is also a bittersweet taste in the teacher's mouth; one of sadness, one of fear, and one of anxiety. The questions she poses about her future, away from these kids, away from this place she has called home for four years. She is excited to start a new adventure, but she doesn't want to leave. She feels like she finally belongs, and she is worried about being on her own for real. Although it was challenging to live alone in the North for four years, she never really felt alone because she had her students and colleagues to comfort her. She had her "Northern" family – a group of people who were closer to her than anyone had ever been. They knew her and she knew them inside out. She was worried about being alone back "home". She worried she would no longer fit in. She worried she wouldn't be able to make it. She was sad that this moment was so fleeting; that it would be over so soon, and that soon, everything would be over, and the kids wouldn't remember her, and that she would lose her family. But at this moment, she smiled. Smiled so wide and laughed so hard, that she forgot about her worries and went on, breathing in the fresh crisp air and sealing it in her heart.

This first memory text draft I wrote, inspired by a photographic prompt, allowed me to delve deep into the memory of that day. Describing everything and everyone around me in such detail allowed me to detach and abstract myself from the memory and attend to the other elements captured in that moment. As the other participants also noted after sharing their own drafts, it was difficult to write about oneself in the third person (rjp.2). At the same time, it allowed the conflicting feelings inside of me to come through and to state them more easily, as there was a certain detachment and feeling of freedom that came with writing in the third person. After each participant shared her text with the group, we then each took turns asking the questions we had agreed upon for analysis (see Appendix C) before the next participant read her text. We recorded our answers on the sheets I had provided, as they would help us write our second drafts. I have included pictures of my answers to the questions on this sheet:

Example 1: Analyzing Memory Texts (Answers)



Kim.

Kimberley Sanchez-Soares – Appendix 3

Questions for Analyzing Memory Texts
from Mitchell, C. & Weber, S. (2014). *Reinventing Ourselves as Teachers: Beyond Nostalgia.* London: Falmer Press. (p. 63)

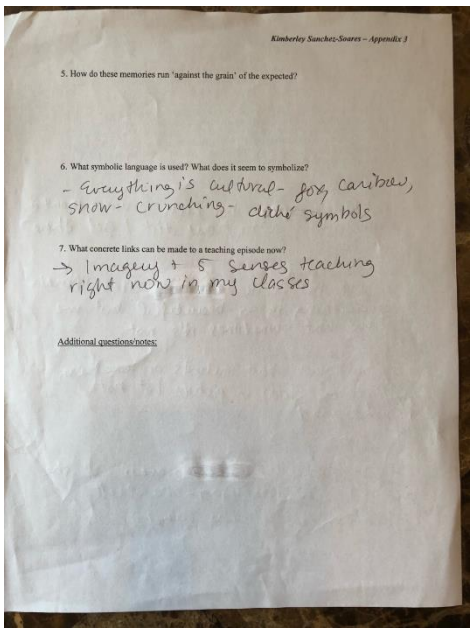
These questions are to be used as a guideline for analyzing and deconstructing our memory texts. Reading, sharing and discussing each of the participants' texts will allow for different perspectives, new insights and knowledge to emerge. The questions are to be generated, accepted, rejected, altered and extended by the participants to encourage the fostering of trust and collectivity among the group (Haug, 2000; Clare & Johnson, 2000). **Please edit the questions accordingly, and note your responses to the questions in the spaces provided.**

1. Are there ambiguities?
– Solitude + space but rich environment + community; also how did I get there?

2. What clichés are used? Why?
A little but poetic. Sara likes "Nunavia" everything is so beautiful but we know that sometimes it's not.

3. What's missing from these memories?
I didn't talk about students or teaching.
– Driver of skidoo in picture but not mentioned

4. What are the commonalities? How does the group account for anomalies?
– It spoke to Nathalie even if she wasn't in community – she felt similar about the land.



Kimberley Sanchez-Soares – Appendix 3

5. How do these memories run 'against the grain' of the expected?

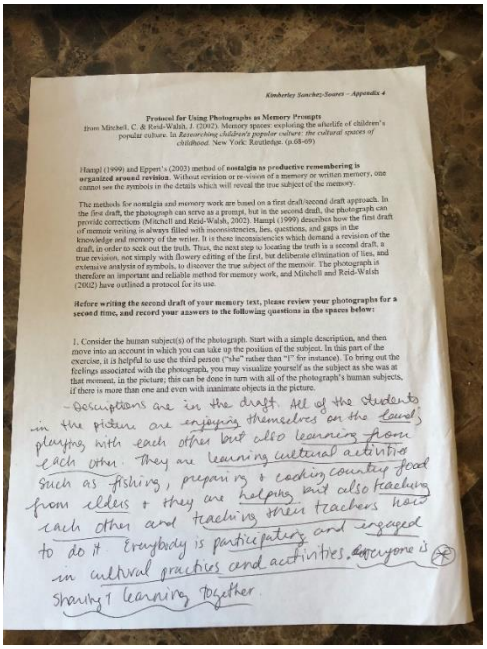
6. What symbolic language is used? What does it seem to symbolize?
– Everything is cultural – fox, caribou, snow – crunching – cliché symbols

7. What concrete links can be made to a teaching episode now?
→ Imagery + 5 Senses teaching right now in my classes

Additional questions/notes:

As stated in the previous chapter, the participants then opted to write their second drafts on their own time. In order to do so, we followed the Protocol for Using Photographs as Memory Prompts (Appendix D). I have included pictures of the notes I took on my personal protocol sheet, to demonstrate how it helped me make the necessary revisions and corrections needed to rid the text of inconsistencies, lies, questions and gaps, as well as analyze the symbols and discover the true subject of my text:

Example 2: Protocol for Using Memory Prompts (Notes):



Kimberley Sanchez-Soares – Appendix 4

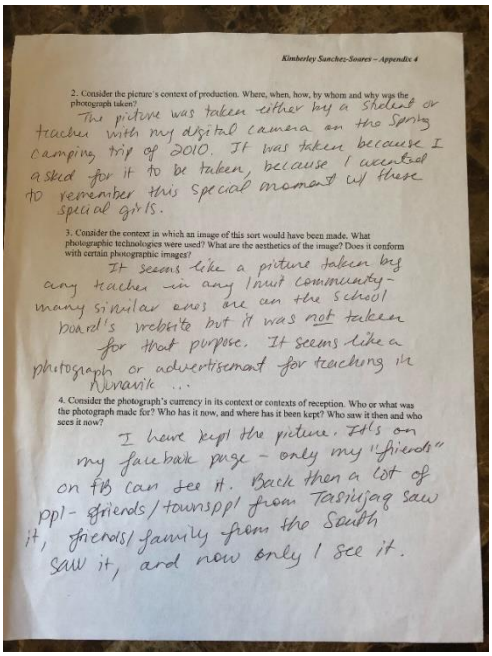
Protocol for Using Photographs as Memory Prompts
From Mitchell, C. & Reid-Walsh, J. (2002). Memory spaces: exploring the afterlife of children's popular culture. In *Researching children's popular culture: the cultural spaces of childhood.* New York: Routledge. (p.68-69)

Haug(1999) and Eppert's (2003) method of **nostalgia as productive remembering is organized around revision.** Without revision or re-vision of a memory or written memory, one cannot see the symbols in the details which will reveal the true subject of the memory.

The methods for nostalgia and memory work are based on a first draft/second draft approach. In the first draft, the photograph can serve as a prompt, but in the second draft, the photograph can provide corrections (Mitchell and Reid-Walsh, 2002). Haug1 (1999) describes how the first draft of memoir writing is always filled with inconsistencies, lies, questions, and gaps in the knowledge and memory of the writer. It is these inconsistencies which demand a revision of the draft, in order to seek out the truth. Thus, the next step to locating the truth is a second draft, a true revision, not simply with flowery editing of the first, but deliberate elimination of lies, and extensive analysis of symbols, to discover the true subject of the memoir. The photograph is therefore an important and reliable method for memory work, and Mitchell and Reid-Walsh (2002) have outlined a protocol for its use.

Before writing the second draft of your memory text, please review your photographs for a second time, and record your answers to the following questions in the spaces below:

1. Consider the human subject(s) of the photograph. Start with a simple description, and then move into an account in which you can take up the position of the subject. In this part of the exercise, it is helpful to use the third person ("she" rather than "I" for instance). To bring out the feelings associated with the photograph, you may visualize yourself as the subject as she was at that moment, in the picture; this can be done in turn with all of the photograph's human subjects, if there is more than one and even with inanimate objects in the picture.
– Descriptions are in the draft. All of the students in the picture are engaging themselves on the land, playing with each other but also learning from each other. They are learning cultural activities such as fishing, preparing + cooking country food from elders + they are helping but also teaching each other and teaching their teachers how to do it. Everyday is participating and engaged in cultural practices and activities. Everyone is sharing + learning together.



Kimberley Sanchez-Soares – Appendix 4

2. Consider the picture's context of production. Where, when, how, by whom and why was the photograph taken?
The picture was taken either by a student or teacher with my digital camera on the Spring Camping trip of 2010. It was taken because I asked for it to be taken, because I wanted to remember this special moment w/ these special girls.

3. Consider the context in which an image of this sort would have been made. What photographic technologies were used? What are the aesthetics of the image? Does it conform with certain photographic images?
It seems like a picture taken by any teacher in any Inuit community – many similar ones are on the school board's website but it was not taken for that purpose. It seems like a photograph or advertisement for teaching in Nunavik ...

4. Consider the photograph's currency in its context or contexts of reception. Who or what was the photograph made for? Who has it now, and where has it been kept? Who saw it then and who sees it now?
I have kept the picture. It's on my facebook page – only my "friends" on FB can see it. Back then a lot of ppl – friends / townspp from Tasiujaq saw it, friends / family from the South saw it, and now only I see it.

Step 2: Memory Texts and Word Columns

After completing the first day of discussion and our first and second drafts of our memory texts, we reconvened on the second day of inquiry and shared our second drafts with the group. To demonstrate the evolution of our first drafts into our second drafts using the protocol, I have included the second draft of my memory text here:

Example Memory Text 2:

Kimberley's Memory Text : Draft 2

It was Spring camping day of 2010. It was an annual tradition of the school to drive students out on the land for an afternoon of picnicking and activities. Teachers, students, elders, and community members were all invited. Many took the day off work to come join in on the fun. Students were laughing, running and playing on the tundra that was not frozen anymore, but that was beginning to melt in the heat of the Spring sun. Of course snow was still all around, and ice fishing was a popular activity. There was a fishing contest being held. Teachers tried their luck while community members taught them their "tricks" for catching fish and students looked on, laughing. Not laughing at the teachers, but enjoying the fact that they were learning about their culture.

The white teacher surrounded by a group of 4 Inuit girls aged 6-10 were are smiling big, happy smiles. Looking back on that day, everyone was smiling. Kids were running around free and wild, and teachers were running around, playing with them. Everyone was participating in cultural activities, sharing, learning, participating, like one big extended family. No one was left out. Everyone was in their element. It was fun to be out of the classroom and to watch the children do what they do best out on the land. Although many different languages were spoken, and while some elders and teachers didn't speak the same language, everybody understood each other that day. Some older girls were plucking ptarmigan for the soup that would be boiled. Teachers were handing out sandwiches, juice and granola bars. Hot dogs were being boiled, and the smells of bannok being cooked on an open fire wafted up everybody's noses and made everyone hungry. Hungry and eager not just for food, but for fun. For being accepted as they were. Everybody felt like they were a part of this community. Students and teachers were both engaged in communicating, learning, sharing and participating in cultural activities. It was the students' turn to teach. The teachers got a better understanding of their students and were able to form a stronger relationship with them. Everyone was helping, everyone was participating, everyone was playing, and everyone was learning. Everyone was smiling. Big hearty laughing could be heard all around.

Although there was a lot of fun, the teacher remembers the event being bitter-sweet. It was her last year in the community, her last year with her Northern family. She was nervous and anxious about returning home, because for four years, this had been her home, and her students and colleagues had been her family. She feared that she would lose the closeness between her group of teacher-friends and that she would be very lonely back in the South. They had learned and shared together. They trusted and loved each other because of having gone through the highs and lows of this experience together. She feared that no one would understand her back

home. She feared that everything she had gained would be forgotten, and that by leaving the North, she would be leaving a part of her, perhaps even her true self, here on the land. There in Nunavik.

Although these moments of sadness and fear crept up inside of her, the smiling teacher went on smiling. She tried to capture everything in her mind so that when she needed to escape, she would just need to close her eyes and she would be transported back to this moment. Back to feeling loved, free, happy, surrounded by a large family, the energizing rush of the cold, crisp air, the excitement of skidoos chasing geese, the comfort of a hot cup of tea, and the warmth of the smiles exchanged between everyone. Smiles that came from the heart, and that would live in her heart from that day forward. Smiles that she knew she wouldn't see in the South. Smiles that made her feel happy, home, and at peace.

Comparing these two drafts, I can immediately pinpoint the most obvious difference (to me): and that is that what started out as more of an enumeration of details in the first draft, transformed into an analysis of the memory self in the second draft. The words that were repeated: smile, family, home, were the symbols that resonated with me the most, and therefore indicated a clue towards finding the true subject of this story. Also, there is a pull away from the nostalgic and flowery language used in the first draft. That flowery and nostalgic language that depicted what Sara stated reminded her of a description of the fantastical world of Narnia, ("it's like Narnia in Nunavik") was brought to my attention by my participants, hinting that I was perhaps being overly "poetic" and "surreal" to cover or hide the truth, because although the land is breathtaking, sometimes there were also moments in the experience that weren't so beautiful (disc1p. 12-13).

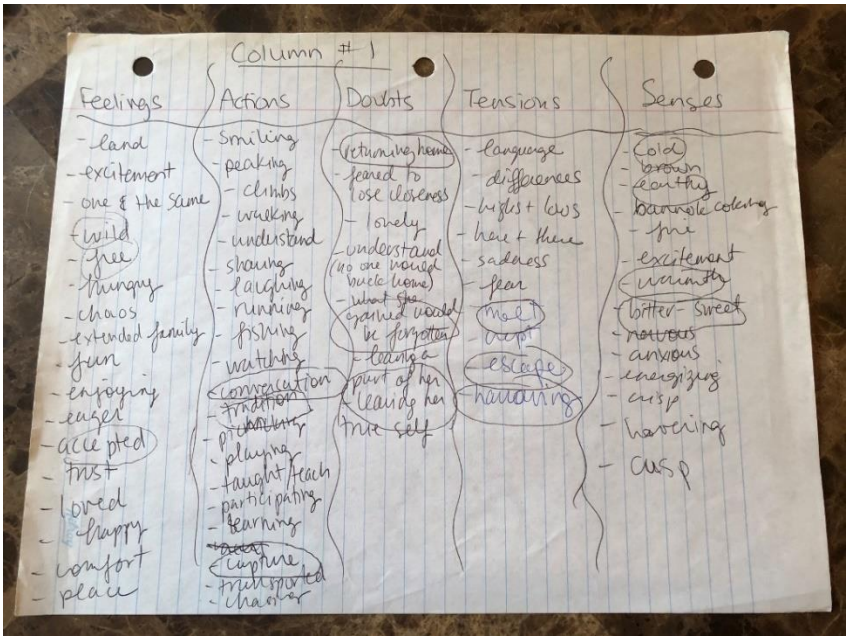
Looking back now, I agree that some unsettling moments were in fact covered by a blanket of snow and euphoria and pointed toward a clear omittance in the first draft: I had only mentioned teaching and learning briefly, even though this was what I believed my study to be about. It seemed that I was more concerned with covering the turmoil I was feeling within, rather than exposing the truth, for fear of reliving or perhaps admitting the sadness and guilt I still felt when revisiting the memory of one of the last community events with my Northern family. Discussing these issues with my participants allowed me to take the necessary step to delve deeper into the memory and not be ashamed or fearful of re-feeling those emotions and of exposing them more truthfully in my second draft. On the other hand, the first draft was written during a period of time when I was teaching my students about imagery and how to use the 5 senses to create a picture in the reader's mind. I therefore believe that teaching imagery to my students during that week strongly influenced the writing style in my first draft. Furthermore, the

use of imagery indicates a concrete link to a current teaching episode, one of the questions we discussed in the protocol for using photographs as memory prompts before writing our second drafts (disc1p.11).

After having shared and discussed our second drafts, we were amazed at how even though our stories were different from each other, they still shared many similarities that we could all begin to list and categorise. The similar themes would become even more evident during the making of our word columns. It is important to note that while my participants and I are all bilingual and our discussions were held in both English and French, Sara, Nathalie and Melissa felt more comfortable writing their texts, columns and poems in French. I have included examples of mine, Sara's and Nathalie's first word columns (based on availability):[9]

Examples of Word Column 1:

Kimberley's Word Column 1



[9] The word column samples are presented as written by the participants in their original languages and fonts. As the poems are the final written artifacts, English translations are provided for the French poems in Appendix E.

Sara's Word Column 1

FEELINGS	ACTIONS	DOUBTS	TENSIONS	SENSES
Désir d'apprendre	Réunir Participer Arriver Chanter Sourire Trancher Vivre Souvenir Goûter S'ouvrir Créer Bâtir Regarder	Capacité Être à la hauteur	Barrière de langue	Bruits Goûter Sentir

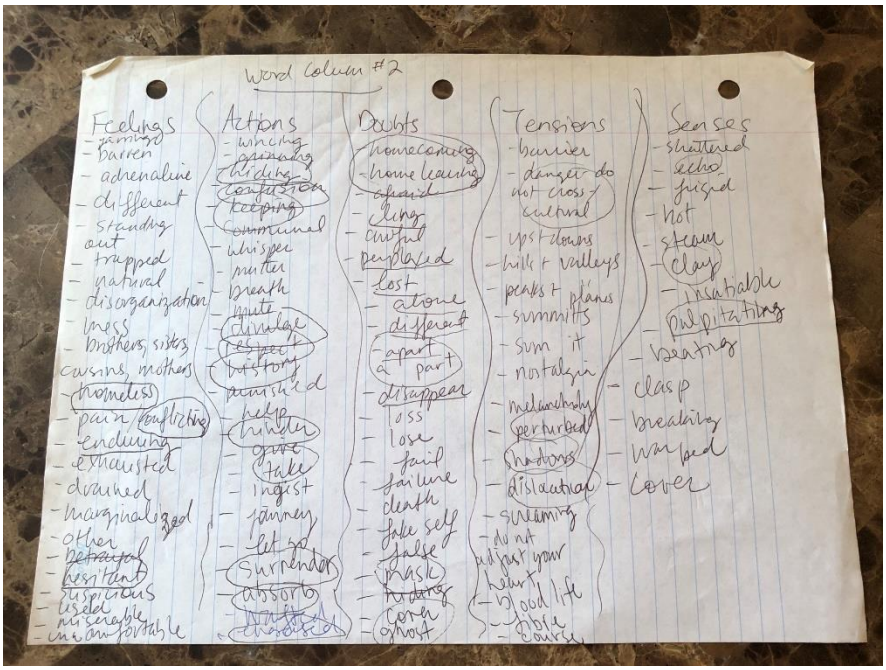
Nathalie's Word Column 1

Feelings	Doubts	Tensions	Actions	Senses
Inquiète Éprouvant Fébriles Bruyant Excité Hâte Surprise Comique Souriant Amuser Forte Contrôle Courageux Curieux Attentif Fière Malaise	Odeur particulière Grosse gorgé Quelques photos Pas très à l'aise redemander Défi relever Anodins	Perspective mamartuq Étendue La chair Être offensé auditoire bien comique la jeunesse Ressent un malaise	Sait Refuser Apelle Acueille Voit Rempli S'installent Survivre Apparaitre Récupérer Sembler Se sent Prend Distribue Explique Observe Recracher Redemander Prend Glisse Comprend Avaler Veut Préparer Ont profiter Propose Déguster Explique Réagisse Goute Abstient A vécu Manger Ressent Partager Offenser Se lance	Démonstration Grand jour Nouvelle famille Allunaq Contry food Buffet de phoque Yeux rieurs Son experience Gens du sud En faire partie

Following the creation of our first columns using the words from our second drafts, as detailed in Chapter Four, we then created a column of words that were not used in our second drafts to allow for a higher degree of abstraction and to dig deeper into the self (Haug, 2000). Both of these word columns (1 and 2) were used to write our poems.

Examples of Word Columns 2:

Kimberley's Word Column 2



Sara's Word Column 2:

FEELINGS	ACTIONS	DOUBTS	TENSIONS	SENSES
Stress Excitation	Voir	Bon endroit	Peur	Toucher Voir

Nathalie's Word Column 2:

Feelings 2	Doubts 2	Tensions 2	Actions 2	Senses 2
Stress Émotions Impatience Bruit Attente Découverte Inconnu Drôle Accueillant Plaisir Pouvoir Limite Volonté Découverte Observation Mouvement Accomplissement Inquiétude	Expérience difficile Difficulté d'avaler Souvenirs rapides Intrusion Faire répéter Rite d'initiation Banal	Point de vue Délicieux Coucher La viande Intrusion Élève Amusant Élève Inquièt	Savoir Gouter Interdire Agir Contacter Manger Recevoir Retenir Observer Vivre Emmagasiner Déménager prévoir Voir Partager Réutiliser Exprimer Paraitre Séparer Ressentir Récolter Fournir Enseigner Regarder Dégouter Répéter Ramasser Débouler Analyser Manger Vouloir Prévoir S'amuser Demander Enseigner Bouleverser	Exposition Jour J Les inuits Nous les blancs Nourriture traditionnelle Évènement Témoins Aventure Montréal Famille

Step 3: The Poems

After having completed our word columns, the participants and I created our poems using the words in our columns as inspiration. These poems, (shared below) along with our discussions, were what would help us determine the influences and impacts of our Nunavik teaching experiences on our current practices.[10]

[10] My English translations of Melissa's, Nathalie's and Sara's poems are provided in Appendix E.

Kimberley's Poem	Melissa's Poem	Nathalie's Poem	Sara's Poem
Winter Mourning Still as morning snow falling quiet, uneven heart in her stomach palpitating the incumbent loss. Perplexed in grief for all she was, all she had learned. Ice would break in the bay And she would melt. The land unmasked revealing change home coming, home leaving. A past would resurface a future would lie in shadows. The secret sun shone, and hid between summits valleys summed it. The uncertain glow of tomorrow whispered bitter-sweet good-byes. Snowflake tears absorbed into her dislocated clay. Apart becomes A part. Shell-shocked love, blood, of cross cultural post-partum. An echo from 60 degrees above.	Tourbillons Il est possible de survivre à la menace. Elle a pu enregistrer la beauté du vide. Pleurer fait du bien dans ce vaste monde. Avancer, reculer, rêver, fait partie du processus. Un changement peut faire peur. C'est important de tout photographier, les maisons, les montagnes, les visages, les animaux. Du blanc, du froid, à l'infini. Quand elle ressent de la tristesse, elle se souvient de sa famille, de ses amis. Imaginer le pire, espérer la chance, vivre du vrai. Après un temps, être convaincue d'avoir trouvé son coin de paradis les deux pieds sur le sol.	Poème Ressentir le besoin de vivre une aventure. Vouloir enseigner, pouvoir partir, déménager, observer, emmagasiner et analyser. Savoir que ce sera une expérience difficile. Se séparer, partager le stress et exprimer ses émotions. Attente. Jour J. Inquiétude et impatience. Regarder s'éloigner Montréal, sa famille. Paraitre forte, se sentir bouleverser. Sauter dans l'avion. Direction accomplissement. Se demander, douter, être forte, être fière. Jour 1 Les inuits sa nouvelle famille d'accueil. Inquiétude. Récupérer son déménagement, s'installer. Prochain évènement : l'école. Difficulté d'avaler. Enseigner, manger, s'amuser. Répéter. Délicieux. Prévoir quitter. Retenir son malaise. Prendre le contrôle et répéter l'aventure. Enseigner, manger, s'amuser. Limite Courte intrusion. Les élèves, les inuits, nous les blancs. Banal. Retenir ses émotions, regarder, emmagasiner et quitter. Montréal. Enseigner, manger, s'amuser. Regarder le passé, se rappeler ne jamais oublier.	Saurais-je? Saurais-je Écouter le bruit Comprendre le silence Entendre les mots Comme une chanson Ouvrir les yeux Regarder Pour voir Pourrais-je Vivre la maison Habiter les rues Marcher le territoire Sentir Entrer à pas feutrés Attendre La porte qui s'ouvre La main qui se tend La syllabe En guise de salutation Bâtir Tisser Créer À chaque seconde de présence Le sourire qui touche Prier Enfin Pour la communion

Next Steps

In this chapter I presented the data collected during the first three days of inquiry. In our journey of communal self-discovery, my participants and I shared pictures and told stories. As storytellers performing ceremony, we respected the tenets of Indigenous methodologies and the seven principles of storywork; we told and listened with our hearts (Archibald, 2008). It soon became apparent that each story, although different, supported, balanced, and spoke with the other. In each story we encountered along the way, we revisited and remembered important touchstones of our Nunavik teaching experience. These touchstones became the foundations, building blocks, and stepping stones that allowed us to create and express our selves through art; through heart, through poetry. These three days of inquiry, however, were not where our journey stopped. We continued our collaborative journey. The following chapter details how the data was analyzed and presents the findings of these first three days of inquiry.

Chapter Six – No Stone Unturned: Data Analysis

The hands of many and the efforts of an entire group were required to build these massive stone sculptures. They are the result of a consensus of purpose, of focused action by a group united in its goal and labour. The Inukshuk are the product of cooperation, teaching us that as good as our individual efforts may be, together we can do even greater things. (The Story of the Inukshuk, 2016, para. 2)

Tales as Old as Time

On the heels of the (June, 2019) release of *Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls,* I am reminded of the incredible power of stories. As I watched the CTV news report on the television that night, everything else that was going on in my life faded far out into the distance. As my eyes narrowed and ears focused, I watched in solemn solitude. My heart opened to the women and the stories of women, and I quickly remembered my participants, knowing without a doubt that they too, were watching and listening. I knew that in that instant, we were all united: sisters, mothers, daughters, grandmothers. As I sat on my couch and watched, I prayed silently that the world would listen.

The power of stories across cultural groups, for both the tellers and the listeners, suggests that "narrative is more than just an acquired way of thinking … it is a universal one" (Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 63). Since the beginning of time, tales as old as time have existed, as evidenced by the world's various religious and denominational creation stories, Aboriginal creation stories, and ancient societies' histories and legends. The roots of narrative research in academics, dating back only to the 1920s, and subsequently marginalized in favour of surveys and quantitative methods, saw a resurgence during the liberation and women's movements of the 1960s and 1970s (Butler-Kisber, 2010). Interest in personal narratives was reignited, and in the same vein as the three-year duration of the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG), stories were used to "bring silenced voices to centre stage and to question mainstream and deficit notions of history, culture and society" (Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 63). As Butler-Kisber (2010) prognostically wrote, not only do narratives "illustrate the poignancy and potential power of personal experiences, but this way of researching, which requires developing ongoing and trusting relationships, also brought to the surface unsettling questions about power, authority, voice, and representation in research" (p. 63). In light of the Inquiry into MMIWG,

during the era of reconciliation, and with the renewed push for the advancement of women's rights and equalities as spearheaded by the Me Too and Time's Up movements, as well as the space being created in the media for destigmatizing and speaking out about mental illnesses on platforms such as Bell Let's Talk, sharing stories proves the necessity for narratives in our time. The unifying power of narratives allows personal stories and silenced voices to rise from the shadows. By giving them a space to dwell, they break the wheel, and smash the chains of history. When *really* heard, stories give us the power to break barriers and cross borders. They give us strength, courage, freedom and wisdom. They allow us to forgive, to forget, to heal (Eppert, 2003). As the stories told during the Inquiry into MMIWG exemplify, and as Margaret Atwood (2002) also prognostically wrote, "writing has to do with darkness, and a desire or perhaps compulsion to enter it, and, with luck, to illuminate it, and to bring something back out to the light" (p. xxiv).

Ear to the Ground: First Look

Bringing our memories "back out into the light" required a trusting and supporting relationship among my participants and I (Atwood, 2002, p xxiv). Through dialogue and story we created meanings that would help us understand our place in the world, and how our experiences and pedagogy are informed by it (Tanaka, 2012). Living the story with my participants, I recorded and noted my thoughts, perceptions, questions and observations, keeping the lines of communication open, and the two different ways of thinking and knowing (storied/scientific and Indigenous/Western) in constant dialogue with each other (Bruner 1986; Butler-Kisber 2010). (In an attempt to hybridize and bring both worlds together, storied and scientific, and Western and Indigenous, the formal academic approach to analyzing data that I knew I had to use to validate my findings, was one that I struggled with deeply, as I discuss later in this chapter.)

Researcher Journal

As an active participant-researcher, my analysis began on the first day of the collective journey (Butler-Kisber, 2010). From the first meeting with my participants, I recorded "personal and social interaction through detailed field notes, available documents, artifacts produced in the context" and open-ended discussions (Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 69). As discussed in the previous

chapter, I kept a researcher journal "to interrogate [my] assumptions, note reflections, and experiment with interpretations" (Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 69). Writing in my journal, working alongside as well as with my participants, I engaged in "ongoing, iterative, and fluid [analysis] in an inward and outward motion from the first day in the field" (Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 69). As I wrote in my journal during and directly after each discussion, I began to see categories, patterns and themes loosely take shape. I began to code the data from the discussions and memory texts in what I called the "first look" at the data, in order to track the progress and changes of these initial categories (rjp.25).

To help clarify my thoughts, I organized my journal into three different sections. The first section contained field notes taken during the three discussions which included observations, questions, significant points, key words, and ideas for future discussion (rjp.1-24). The second section contained what I labelled as "First Look" at the data collected during the three discussions (rjp.25). I wrote the entries in this section directly after each discussion, as well as while transcribing the audio-recordings of the discussions. This section contains further reflections, questions, thoughts, and initial categories/patterns/themes that emerged from the data (including the written artifacts and discussions) of each day of inquiry (rjp25-32). The third section was titled "Transcript Analysis" (rjp.33). In this section I continued to list and track key words and added burning questions, significant points of discussion, recurring patterns and themes, salient symbols, significant quotes, and emerging categories after reading the transcripts and listening to the audio-recordings of the discussions several times (rjp.33-57).

In my researcher journal, with my field notes from the first discussion, I listed recurring words/phrases that later helped me form categories for coding. In this first look at the data, the recurring words I noticed were: *family, home, happy, community, land, sharing, adapt(ing)/adaptations, being open* and *curriculum* (rjp.26). Each participant had used these words a number of times, whether in discussion of photographs, in the first drafts of our memory texts, in the answers to the questions for analysis of memory texts, or during informal conversation. As noted in Chapter Five, the words *family, home* and *happy* that were repeated in the first and second drafts of my memory text, even after careful revision, hinted towards the possibility that these weren't just popular words, but salient symbols in my journey of self-study. These symbols would later become significant touchstones for each participant.

Conventional Content Analysis, Crystallization, and Corroboration

Conventional content analysis is an adapted version of the constant comparison method, and it is an inductive approach that differs from constructivist grounded theory. The type of design appropriate for conventional content analysis is one in which existing research is limited (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), which is the case regarding the influences and impacts of past Nunavik experiences on returned teacher practices in Southern Quebec. Researchers using conventional content analysis do not use preconceived categories to analyze data; data is first read as a whole to achieve immersion, and then "read word by word to derive codes by first highlighting the exact words from the text that appear to capture key thoughts or concepts" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1279). The researcher makes notes of first impressions and initial analysis, as I did in my researcher journal (Hseih & Shannon, 2005). The analysis continues by labelling emerging categories with words that come "directly from the text and then become the initial coding scheme" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1279). These descriptive codes are then organized into categories based on how they are related and connected (Hseih & Shannon, 2005).

Once our three meetings had taken place, in which the participants and I shared and discussed our written artifacts, I began transcribing the audio-recording of the first discussion. I read through the transcript multiple times, and found the same recurring words as those listed in my field notes and "First Look" at the data, along with other key words, thoughts, and observations (rjp.26). I recorded these in the first entry of the "Transcript Analysis" section of my researcher journal (rjp.33-38). As I read through the transcript, I also compiled a list of commonly used words/phrases that I noticed in each of the first drafts of our memory texts, predicting that these words might re-appear in our second drafts, word columns and most likely in our poems.

The list of common/recurring words that I noticed were: *family, home, happy, community, food, land, sharing, being open, culture, language,* and *peace* (rjp.39). There were also similar themes in the first drafts of our memory texts such as: *feeling like the other, teacher/student relationships, nostalgia, learning, liminality* and various examples of *dualities* (rjp.39). Keeping a record of the recurring words, themes and patterns in a tripartite fashion in my journal (field notes, first look and transcript analysis) with labels and lists (Butler-Kisber, 2010; Cresswell 2009; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) allowed me to develop coherent and justified emerging categories (Butler-Kisber, 2010; Cresswell, 2009; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Such triangulation

ensured that the data was verified at least three different ways and at least three different times. Moreover, beginning the second and third days of inquiry by recapping recurring words and emerging themes allowed member checking to occur (Creswell, 2009). In member checking, the accuracy of the data was verified, and my interpretation of the data was validated, as each participant agreed with my findings. Furthermore, my participants provided critical feedback and input for each section in which their person (for example in the Participant Selection section of Chapter Four) or their artifacts are discussed, thereby further corroborating the data. As Hseih and Shannon (2005) write, in conventional content analysis "credibility can be established through activities such as peer debriefing, prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation … and member checks" (p. 1280).

Richardson (1994) first coined the term as a method of analysis for arts-based research and representation involving the use of story-writing, photography, metaphor and poetry, like the kind of research the participants and I had done in this study (Shagoury, 2011). According to Shagoury (2011), "'crystallization' is an intriguing new method that has emerged in recent years as a kind of three-dimensional data analysis strategy that welcomes the new lens that artistic thinking can bring to conducting and writing research" (p. 297). As Ellingson (2008) writes, "by including different genres such as storytelling, poetry, artistic expression, visual thinking, live performance, and so on, we have more and more angles of vision on a particular topic of research question (in Shagoury, 2011, p. 298). The method of crystallization employs crystals as a metaphor to describe data analysis involving artistic and creative approaches in an attempt to reach towards deeper thinking:

> Crystallization … combines symmetry and substance with an infinite variety of shapes, substances, transmutations, multi-dimensionalities, and angles of approach … Crystallization provides us with a deepened, complex, thoroughly partial understanding of the topic. Paradoxically, we know more and doubt what we know. (Richardson, 1994, p. 522)

The use of crystals as a metaphor interested me, not only because of its link to rocks and my *inukshuk* metaphor, but also because of the many different angles, perceptions and further questions that can result in viewing the data numerous times from different angles. Moreover, crystallization addresses doubts that can arise during the research process. In the above quote, Richardson (1994) speaks to these doubts, which became more numerous and more significant

for me as my data analysis and representation progressed, and which accompanied me throughout the research process and that I looked to address in various ways, as I detail in the chapters to come.

Emerging Categories and Coding

As I read through the transcripts, I highlighted important passages, circled key words, bracketed significant patterns, drew asterisks next to themes, and underlined dualities. Like Hseih and Shannon's Researcher X (2005), I wrote the recurring words that came from the participants in the margins of the transcripts and written artifacts; these key words eventually became preliminary codes for the emerging categories (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). In my researcher journal, I began a new list in which I enumerated emerging categories and themes as a point of reference, so that as I read and analyzed, I could keep adding common words/themes (rjp.32). I then went back through the transcripts, categorizing each word/phrase/passage that had been marked, labelling these with abbreviations from the new list compiled in my journal. These labels formed the foundation of the different categories I used to organise and analyse the data, comparing the information collected in the transcripts to that in the three sections of my journal, as well as in the written documents produced by the participants, thus re-triangulating the data using the conventional content analysis and crystallization methods. With all three transcripts and all written artifacts produced by the participants verified and corroborated numerous times in various ways, I felt confident enough to begin grouping these descriptive categories into clusters that would help answer my research question. The categories that emerged in the data from the recurring words, phrases and themes were:

1. *Liminal identity*; further broken down into *pre-Northern identity* and *post-Northern identity*, labelled as P/PI
2. *Education policy*, labelled as Ed.P
3. *Curriculum*, labelled as Curr
4. *Language*, labelled as Lang
5. *Community*, labelled as Comm
6. *Family*, labelled as F
7. *Learning style*, labelled as Learning
8. *Impact or influence*, labelled as Imp/Infl
9. *Teaching methods and skills*, labelled as TM/S
10. *Teaching style*, including teacher identity, labelled as TI/S
11. *Nostalgia*, labelled as N

12. *Culture*, labelled as Cult.
13. *Research*, labelled as R
14. *The land*, labelled as Land
15. *Relationship with students*, labelled as Rel.
16. *Reverse culture shock*, labelled as RCS
17. *Social justice*, labelled as SJ
18. *Other*, labelled as O
19. *Methodology*, labelled as M
20. *Questioning*, labelled as Q
21. *Dualities*, labelled as Dual
22. *Healing*, labelled as Healing (rjp.32)

The next step was to develop definitions for each category (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). I created these definitions to signify how the words were being used by the participants in the data, as well as to help me identify relationships between them. The definitions for these categories were:

Table 1: Categories and Definitions

CATEGORY	DEFINITION
Liminal identity	Feelings of exile, of living in between, as in: both or neither the North or the South are home; includes struggling with pre-North and post-Northern identities (including change)
Education policy	Issues regarding policy, bureaucracy, administration, accessibility, frustrations and questions of teacher value/place and student well-being/success within the Quebec Education system (in both the North and South)
Curriculum	Planning, creating material/lessons, obligatory units, flexibility, creativity, addressing students' needs/interests, mandatory testing, adapting, modifying, implementing, indigenizing, pressure to adhere/complete rapidly vs taking time to check for understanding
Language	Barriers, cultural significance, expression, understanding, use of, power of, words, Inuktitut, English, French
Community	Participation/involvement in, social events, being a part of, active member of, importance of, acceptance in, belonging to, support, sharing, helping, school community, colleagues

Family	Adopting/building of new/Northern family including relationships with students, colleagues and friends, developing trust, love, happiness and respect within this new family, feeling of belonging associated with being a member
Learning style	Different types of learning styles, Indigenous learning, different types of knowing/thinking
Impact/influence	Influence(s)/ impact(s) from the North on current teaching practice/personal life
Teaching methods and skills	Patience, creativity, flexibility, understanding, openness, classroom management, curriculum design, adaptations, observation, students needs
Teaching style	Teacher identity, teacher role, love of teaching/students, individuality, importance of mental health, community/family, putting students and their needs first, relationship with colleagues
Nostalgia	Grief and/or feelings associated with missing the Northern lifestyle, landscape, teaching and family; trying to duplicate those feelings/circumstances in the South
Culture	Aspects of Inuit culture such as food, sharing, importance of the land, language, fishing, hunting, tools, clothing, and being open to participate in Inuit culture
Research	Questions/comments regarding this study and/or participation in this study
The land	Importance of the land in Nunavik for Inuit; significance of the land for the participants, happiness, peace, freedom (immensity, mountains, water, sky, snow, etc.)
Relationship with students	Importance of building close relationship with students (interests, trust, humour, needs, etc.)
Reverse culture shock	Feelings/circumstances of struggling to return and to readapt to Southern culture, city life, society, work, and relationships, including struggling to feel sense of belonging
Social justice	Feelings/declarations of support, alignment, with Indigenous views, including defense and awareness of Indigenous causes and spreading awareness; becoming supporters
Other	Feeling as the "other", marginalized in the North for being *Qallunaat* and feeling misunderstood in the South (post-North)

Methodology	Questions/comments regarding the methodology in this study
Questioning	Questions, tensions, worries, doubts, concerns, fears, anxieties related to one's development, value, role, voice, view, location, place, future, identity (professional and personal) in Nunavik and in the South
Dualities	Relationships of opposites such as *Qallunaat*/Inuit; teacher/student, insider/outsider, settler/coloniser, etc.
Healing	Feelings of closure, healing, peace, moving on/moving forward

The three sections in my researcher journal, the printed transcripts, and copies of written documents were now filled with various different markings and codes. At first glance, the pages seemed overwhelmed by numerous messy scribbles, but on closer inspection, the different markings indicated that many categories were interrelated, as most passages were labelled with more than one or two codes. In fact, the majority of passages were marked with a number of different codes, signalling the symbiotic relationship between the categories.

According to Creswell (2009), a common approach to coding data by hand includes creating lists of categories from clusters and segments of data, which are identified by descriptive key words and abbreviations. Using conventional content analysis and crystallization, I went over the data various times to find categories that could help answer my main research question: what are the influences and impacts of my participants' and my Northern teaching experience on our current practices in Southern Quebec? In narrative inquiry, coding is done less inductively, and a broader, thematic approach is used to discover unifying symbols and construct a holistic understanding of the narratives (Butler-Kisber, 2010). As my study involved narrative and poetic inquiry, I thought it would be important to incorporate thematic analysis of the memory texts and poems along with the conventional content analysis method. Joining the two types of analysis would allow a) the specific categories to help me answer my research questions regarding influence and impact; and b) the broader, thematic interpretations of the memory texts and poems to coexist and inform each other, thereby tying the assortment of data and its analysis together.

As I try to make sense of my self and of my place in the world, feeling neither one or the other, neither here nor there, but a mix of my two experiences and selves (insider and outsider), it was only fitting that my approach to analysis reflected these feelings and perspectives. In the following sections of this chapter, I present my analysis of the collected data, as well as discuss the difficulties I experienced in trying to merge two modes of thought (storied and scientific) and ways of knowing (Western and Indigenous).

Nose to the Grindstone: Analysis

Day 1: Photographic Prompts and First Drafts of Memory Texts

Where would I begin? With my results? With the written artifacts? The discussions? Did I need to write about each source of data or just the poems? The questions came quickly and without end. I decided the most logical place to start was from the beginning (Creswell, 2009). Working my way from the first discussion and first draft up to the third day and final written artifacts (the participant poems) would allow me to present the findings in an organic way, showing the progression of thought, as well as how the evolution of our writing process developed.

To begin, I examined the notes in my researcher journal and coded transcripts regarding the discussion of the photographs that my participants and I shared. The photographs, after all, were the beginning place of our memory work and the source of inspiration for our poems; they were what propelled us into our collective journey and as such were integral components of our self-study. The discussions depicted significant markers of our experiences in Nunavik. Moreover, they helped illuminate what might have been hiding deep within the self, by eliciting different views and provoking questions that helped us see the photographs (and the elements captured in them) in a different light. As Melissa stated before sharing her pictures, *Mostly I can find something behind the pictures, not the picture itself,* (disc1p.1).[11] When sharing a *postcard* type of picture she had taken of a Northern landscape, Melissa further offered *[because of]the immensity of the North, it's impossible not to reflect on yourself; on life in general,"*(disc1p.2). Similarly, regarding one of the pictures she shared, Nathalie explained: *Whatever happened at*

[11] Participant quotes within the main body of text are identified by italics.

that moment, I don't remember, but that picture having re-seen it after a long time, it came to my mind when thinking about this research and I think it's important (disc1p.8).

Combining the data collected in my researcher journal and the transcripts of our discussion, I was able to determine some preliminary key words. When sharing my photos, I used the word 'happy' four times, and Melissa used the word 'proud' three times, indicating our strong emotional ties to the memories of our experience (rjp.33). Some other words I used that stood out were the land, the community and food (rjp.33). These specific words had also been repeated, signalling that they were meaningful. When Melissa spoke, she also referred to the land, culture and food, as well as highlighted the importance of her relationships with her students and feeling as the other (rjp.33). When Sara shared, she commented on how she felt at home in Nunavik and how she still feels like Nunavik is home: the relationship with her students, learning, the importance of community, culture, the land, feeling as the other, as well as the reverse culture shock she experienced when she returned to Montreal (rjp.33). Nathalie's key words were culture, learning, community, food, sharing, learning, the land, and the worries and tensions she felt (professional and personal) about being a *Qallunaat* in an Inuit village (rjp.34).

The three to four pictures we each shared were an assortment of different social, community and school events (some being of the participants' first community feast, first group of students, first fishing trip, etc.) and of different times in our experience. We each shared pictures that captured some of our first moments in Nunavik as well as some of our last, as these marked the most personally significant events of our experiences. Repeated words and recurring themes were emerging as salient symbols and important markers of our experience. I have compiled these in a table below.

Table 2: Key Themes from Photographic Prompts

Participant	Key Words
Kimberley	*Happy, land, community, food*
Melissa	*Pride, the land, culture, food, feeling like the other*
Sara	*Home, liminality, relationship with students, learning, community, culture, land, feeling as the other, reverse culture shock*
Nathalie	*Culture, learning, community, food, sharing, learning, land, feeling as the other and accepting her otherness*

Although all the pictures we shared represented meaningful memories, the discussions helped each of us to choose a picture that we felt held the most personal significance and that would serve as a writing prompt. The picture that spoke loudest to me was one of a school fishing trip. It was the final excursion we had gone on in my last year in Nunavik. The picture is composed of many elements of the Northern teaching experience that I hold dear: it is a vivid scene of community members, colleagues and students all enjoying ourselves together out on the land. The picture that sparked Melissa's memory and text was a picture she had taken from the window of the plane as she was arriving to the community for the first time (see Chapter Five). It shows a bird's eye view of a vast Northern landscape speckled by a small cluster of colourful houses. Nathalie felt compelled to write about her first community event, a picture that captured the first feast she attended in the school gym with various community members, students and colleagues. Sara was inspired by a similar memory; the picture she chose to help revisit her experience was also of her first feast in the school gym.

As discussed previously, I kept track of recurring words/themes from each of the first drafts of the memory texts in my researcher journal. The recurring words were: *family, home, happy, community, food, land, sharing, being open, culture, language,* and *peace* (rjp.39). There were also some patterns and themes that signaled categories and hinted at the relationships between them such as: *feeling like the other, teacher/student relationships, nostalgia, learning,* and *liminality*. Also: various examples of dualities, such as: the tensions between inside feelings/thoughts and their outward expressions; minute personal questions/worries against the immensity of the vast Northern landscape, the professional teacher versus her personal identity, the unsettling and uncomfortable feelings of colonized/colonizing, including those of the insider who is also an outsider (rjp.39).

Following the sharing of our first drafts, the participants and I were able to determine many similarities and overlaps between the texts. Nathalie noted of my first draft: *Really, for me, you know it speaks to me that text even if I wasn't in the same village* (disc1p.13). We also identified omissions and gaps, which we attempted to address in our second drafts. Furthermore, we acknowledged what influences apparent in these texts have made a concrete impact on our current teaching practices. Our key observations, were already very telling. The main themes observable in each if the initial texts are summarized in Table 2.1

Table 2.1: Main Themes Memory Text Draft 1

Participant	Key Themes Draft 1	Link to Current Teaching
Kimberley	*Land, nostalgia, home, family, happiness, culture, community, learning, sharing, food, questioning, liminality, questioning, open, dualities*	Using the 5 senses (imagery) in writing; referring to students/class as family
Nathalie	*Community, feast, family, culture, food, sharing, learning, dualities, being open, questioning*	Groupwork and group activities; trying to develop the feeling of community in her class and school
Sara	*Community, feast, food, language, culture, being open, learning, relationship with students*	Being open/adapting (to new teaching situations), different learning styles; feeling that she's the other
Melissa	*Journey, peace, home, happiness, open, dualities,*	Relationship with students and hook/icebreaker with new groups

Of the four memory texts, only Sara's included a conversation with a student. None deal with a formal teaching or classroom episode, which is not to say that teaching or our classrooms were not significant parts of our Northern experience. Rather, teaching moments in the North were not limited to the classroom. As teachers in small Northern communities, living in such close proximity to our students meant that teachable moments and relationships with students often took place outside of the school setting and out on the land. In different parts of the town and outside of school hours, on weekend fishing excursions or during evening walks, students would accompany, share, talk, learn, and play with us, their teachers. The first and second drafts of my memory text (see Chapter Five) exemplify this phenomenon, as they describe a fishing excursion where various members of the community, teachers and students participated in the sharing and exchange of different types of knowledge. During these informal learning moments, students would often teach us, the teachers, about their culture and language, creating an occasion for building strong student-teacher relationships. Such opportunities are virtually non-existent in most urban teaching milieus in Southern Quebec. Sara elaborated on this point while discussing a picture she shared of a weekend walk:[12]

[12] All student names have been replaced by pseudonyms for anonymity.

> *Your students are everywhere, all the time, and sometimes when you go walk to the Co-op they follow you, and you see them everywhere actually… your role as a teacher or your role as a human does not limit itself to the four walls of your class, in fact you're always influencing the children, and it was super fun that walk because they showed me how I wasn't walking properly on the rocks, or they threw rocks at a ptarmigan and showed me how to do it.* (disc1p.3)[13]

Discussion

The inter-relatedness of most of the categories made the task of organizing the data and presenting the findings arduous. From the few examples I've shown in excerpts from discussion of the pictures and in my own memory texts, key themes such as *food, the land, being happy, community, learning, relationships with students, feeling as the other, nostalgia, family, culture, liminality* and various *dualities* all exist and co-exist as one unified whole; like the stones in an *inukshuk*, they all depend, support, interact and inform each other. To illustrate, learning happened on the land, which is part of the Inuit culture, which includes sharing food, which in turn helped us strengthen our relationships with students, made us feel happy to be part of a family and community, which we are nostalgic for, which therefore raises questions of liminality, and feeling like the other in both places, North and South. How would I be able to show the overlapping, influencing, and symbiotic essence of all of these categories?

As a visual learner, I thought grouping the categories into a concept map would be a helpful way for me to understand/interpret how they are related and work together, making the task of adding information easier as I went along. This in fact proved to be the complete opposite, as the categories and relationships kept becoming more complex and nuanced. Rather than trying to force the emerging data into shapes or clusters with adjoining lines and arrows to demonstrate their relationships, I let the emerging categories 'marinate' on the coded pages and lists in my researcher journal, as well as in my mind. From time to time I would add to my preliminary concept map or play with various attempts at reconfiguring it, but I would always fail at organizing and grouping the data into a linear fashion.

The data was clearly trying to tell me something; perhaps it wasn't that I couldn't see clearly, or that I was doing something wrong, but rather that the data didn't want to be confined in such a way. I went back to the data using a thematic approach to analysis, reminding myself that part of my data consisted of narratives and discussions about our narratives, and that I

[13] Longer participant quotes are set apart from the main text and identified by italics.

should therefore incorporate the words of my participants to help me present the findings in a more holistic way (Butler-Kisber, 2010; Hseih & Shannon, 2005). Analysing the data using a thematic approach is also more in line with Indigenous forms of conducting and presenting data analysis (Wilson, 2008), and since I was determined to honour and respect the research as ceremony, I approached thematic analysis through the method of crystallization. Crystallization, as Ellingson writes in Shagoury (2011), "provides an effective approach to richly describing our findings as we 'encounter and make sense of data through more than one way of knowing'" (p. 298). How I would integrate the participants' words so that their thoughts and perceptions were told in their voice, however, was another difficulty and concern that I struggled with. I knew I wanted their voices to weave in an out among the presentation of data. I knew that as in a sharing circle, I owed the storytellers the space to allow their words be heard, but I still needed to find a way to do so (Wilson, 2008).

In preparation for reporting the findings, I created tables demonstrating exemplars of data for each of the categories, so that they were readily available for when I had figured out a way to include the participants' words in the presentation of findings (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1279). In the following table (Table 2.2), the initial letter of the participants' first names appears in brackets next to the emerging categories, indicating which participant the words originated from, or the word 'all' indicates that we all four used the word or expressed the theme either during our discussions about the photographs and/or first drafts. In the third column, I included salient participant quotes for each category.[14]

Table 2.2: Emerging Categories Day 1

Emerging Categories	Participants	Salient Quotes
Happy	(K, M)	*This was a nice picnic day that we had on the land, and I think this is my favourite picture from my time up North because everyone's* ***happy*** (Kdisc1p.1). *we were all* ***happy*** *then and I remember that I got through that year that was really difficult, and I'm proud. I'm proud of them, I'm proud of what I accomplished* (Mdisc1p.1).
Home	All	*Upon arriving…I felt already at* ***home*** (Sdisc1p.2). *She was worried about being alone back "****home****." She worried she would no longer fit in* (Kdisc1p.11).

[14] Participant quotes in tables are identified by italics, with the initial of the participant's name appearing before the transcript page reference. The emerging categories in the participant quotes appear in bold text to emphasize their context within the quote more clearly.

		The time to go ***home*** *has come […] she thinks she will stay [in the village] for at least ten years* (Mdisc1p.25).
Other	All	*You're just another* ***Qallunaak*** *passing by through their lives* (Mdisc1p.2). *It's like I'm the one who doesn't fit in again. In the North* ***I wasn't Inuit, here I'm not****…*(Sdisc1p.19). *I find it really interesting that even though we were* ***outsiders*** *[…] we were able to let go so quickly* (Kdisc1p.25). *you know you're* ***white*** *[…] it has to do with the feeling in a way that you're being watched, you know?* (Kdisc1p.16)
Liminality	(K,S, N)	*and this picture is a bit discomforting because it's six years that I've been back but I still feel like* ***[it] is still a bit home*** (Sdisc1p.2). *it's important that feeling of being united and* ***I don't find it here*** (Ndisc1p.16).
Dualities	All	*you realize a bit that we are like* ***a spot in the universe*** *in fact, when you're* in the immensity of the North*, and that yes you have an impact, but at the same time the planet is so big and the land is so big* (Sdisc1p.4). ***you're alone****, it's really about solitude and space, but then […]* ***you have a community****, a life that's very rich around you, so it's a bit contradictory* (Ndisc1p.14).
Relationship with students	All	*and this defines sometimes the* ***relationship*** *sometimes you have with the teenagers* (Mdisc1p.2). *Being able to identify with the person, I think that we all know that as teachers, if you don't have a* ***relationship with your students*** *[…] there's not much that can happen* (Sdisc1p.29).
Community	All	*in the North when something happens, life stops, and* ***everyone*** *goes to the same place, and* ***everyone*** *lives the same thing at the same time* (Sdisc1p.3). *At each moment she felt she was experiencing special moments as part of a* ***community*** *that would become a second family for her for a very long time (Ndisc1p.15)* *we were all working in the same direction. You know there was a real spirit of* ***teamwork*** *and everyone going in the same direction, which you find very rarely in regular schools here* (Sdisc1p.23).
Family	(K, N)	*We are all a large* ***extended family****. No one is left out. Everyone is important* (Kdisc1p.11). *She misses that* ***family****. She misses it. […]she experienced deep human connection and a need for community. She hasn't found that in her original family. She misses her* ***Inuit family*** (Ndisc1p.15).
Sharing	All	*Everybody* ***sharing*** *food together, everybody do something [to participate]* (Mdisc1p.2). *Students, teachers, community members of all ages, all together on the land,* ***sharing*** *food, warmth and conversation* (Kdisc1p.11).
Food	All	*the* ***country food*** *there, My God it occupies a large place and it unites the community a lot* (Ndisc1p.5). *Large tables were placed in the centre of the gym covered with dishes. Caribou stews, bannock, blueberry muffins, smoked char, and other types of dishes, composed as much of* ***country food*** *as well as Qallunaat sources of nutrition* (Sdisc1p.17). *These are community events that are… not just in the North, but like* ***food*** *in general is very social* (Sdisc1p.18).
Nostalgia	(K, N, S)	*She was* ***sad*** *that this moment was so fleeting; that it would be over so soon, and that soon, everything would be over, and the kids*

		wouldn't remember her, and that she would lose her family (Kdisc1p.11). *There's something there that I* ***miss*** *[…] that makes me want that feeling from the North […] but it's never like there* (Ndisc1p.16).
Learning/teaching	All	*in the North you're not stuck in your classroom, and I took advantage to get out […] because it's an essential part of* ***teaching*** *there* (Ndisc1p.4). *You have to change your vision, your view of things […] you can't* ***teach*** *the same way, you can't take on things on the same way. Everything has to be adapted […] we had to like put on another set of glasses on our eyes to be able to reach them* (Sdisc1p.19-20). *they're not* ***learning*** *in their language […] in their* ***way of learning*** *(*Sdisc1p.21). ***Teaching*** *is not easy, period* (Ndisc1p.37).
Land	All	*it's real life for Inuit people, Inuit kids,* ***on the land****, going in search of animals, so it's very representative of teaching up North too* (Mdisc1p.2). *the* ***skidoo rides*** *when we would go everybody together with a hot chocolate, like to go* ***fishing****, or… we really tried to live the North like the North should be lived […] not just staying at home watching movies for example, but to try to really understand what it was and to visit* [Sdisc1p.3).
Culture	All	*I think it doesn't happen often enough for all of the kids, you know a bit the* ***loss of culture****, because we have to get together, everybody together to show it all to the children* (Ndisc1p.5). *She reminded herself that she must […] demonstrate interest in* ***Inuit culture*** (Sdisc1p.17). *we want to emphasize the integration of [Inuit]* ***culture****, but there's nothing on adapting* (Mdisc1p. 30).
Language	(K, S, M)	*Even though they do not speak the same* ***language****, they understand each other on this day* (Kdisc1p.11). *For me it's more in your* ***language****, in the context of words […] that we used there, because we can't really translate them […] they're strong, they're powerful, and you couldn't say it in another way […] they're like that and they're there to be used like that* (Ndisc1p.18). *they have to learn and they have to fend for themselves in a* ***language*** *that is not theirs* (Sdisc1p.23). *it would be easier if it was taught in* ***Inuktitut*** *[…] and then everyone would understand* (Sdisc1p.29).
Open	All	*She's not sure but determined to try and to show to her new family (her class, her colleagues) that she wants to live the experience and that she's* ***open****. She opens herself to a new culture, she wants to learn* (Ndisc1p.14). *she knew that her* ***openness*** *and her desire to know more about her student's culture was bigger and deeper than her desire to enjoy a mixture of fat and blueberries* (Sdisc1.p17).
Peace	(K, M)	*Despite everything, Melissa is happy and* ***serene*** (Mdisc1.25). *Something that is similar, my text wasn't about my first time there, but I still felt happy and at* ***peace****, like you mentioned* (Kdisc1p.25).
Questioning	(K, N)	*The* ***questions*** *she poses about her future, away from these kids, away from this place she has called home for four years* (Kdisc1p.11) *I remember during those 2 years asking a lot of* ***questions*** *like 'what's my goal in teaching them?'* (Ndisc1p.24)

Student needs	(S, M)	*The North taught me to really **start with the students** […] and to try to see the world **from their perspective*** (Sdisc1p.19). *My goal is to teach Inuit students, and to answer to the best of my abilities to their **needs**. I'm not saying that the have needs to begin with […] but it's my job to see that those that need help, I have to help them* (Mdisc1p.28) *The programs are not necessarily adapted in the way that we are asked to do things doesn't start with the **needs** of the students* (Sdisc1p.30)
Curriculum	(N, S, M)	*What am I doing teaching French here when I know that my students will never use French […] why follow a **curriculum** that isn't suited to them?* (Ndisc1p. 24). *it should be an Inuk who's teaching that, because usually it's the reading that bugs [agreement] because they can't read the problem […] and then you could really **evaluate** mathematics rather than their ability to read* (Sdisc1p.29) *Yes it's true, we took a science book, and we **adapted** it, and we edited it, and we wrote it in our own vernacular, but it's not better you know? You took off a layer, but it's not easier* (Mdisc1p.30).
Education Policy	(S, M)	*We live in Montreal, so we do have a lot of allophones and immigrants who struggle through an **education system** that is not adapted to them – that is honestly not adapted for a lot of people presently* (Sdisc1p.23). *Well that's another problem, they struggled, they got **budgets** to be able to stick to the **MELS** the most possible, but it was [expletive]* (Mdisc1p.29). *But honestly, the fact that the **school board** is in the South, I still can't wrap my head around it. How can it be that the school board of the great North, it's head office is in Ville Saint-Laurent? […] Your office should be surrounded by the tundra […] you have to be in the reality to be able to adapt yourself to the reality. It's nice to try to **develop programs** while you're in the South […] but go there, and **consult** the people that are there […] that is one of the anomalies of teaching in the North; that the school board does not even have its offices [in the North]* (Sdisc1p.30).

Compared to the master list of twenty-two categories and their rules of inclusion (see Table 1, above), fifteen of the emerging categories from Day 1 (Table 2.2 above), namely: *other, liminality, dualities, relationship with students, community, family, nostalgia, learning, teaching, land, culture, language, questioning, curriculum* and *education policy* were already present after the first day of inquiry. The seven remaining emerging categories in the list from Day 1 (*happy, home, sharing, food, open, peace* and *student needs*) were eventually included in the rules of inclusion of the master list (Table 1). Interestingly, only Sara mentioned the reverse culture shock she felt when returning to Montreal, but it would also become included in the master list of categories, increasing the emerging categories for Day 1 from fifteen to sixteen. It was evident, then, that from the first day of inquiry, a significant amount of discovery occurred. As I show in the next sections of this chapter, these emerging categories and themes from Day 1 would

continue to contribute to the analysis and interpretation of the data, providing meaningful insights. As the following excerpt from the conclusion of our first discussion demonstrates, we were all eager to continue the journey:[15]

> Kimberley: *You have no idea how thankful and appreciative I am for you all of you taking time out of your day…to do [this].*
> Sara: *No, I really loved it, it's super interesting.*
> Melissa: *It's interesting! To see,*
> Nathalie: *To see the result.*
> Sara: *Yeah.*
> Melissa: *To push the memory.* (disc1p.36).

Day 2: Second Drafts of Memory Texts and Word Columns

On our second day of inquiry, we shared and discussed the second drafts of our memory texts. As mentioned previously, the participants composed second drafts based on Hampl's (1999) method (see Chapters Three and Five). The participants re-viewed, re-visited and revised their first drafts on their own time, which allowed them to see, think, and carefully consider "the symbols in the details which would reveal the true subject of the memory" (Protocol for Using Photographs as Memory Prompts, Appendix D). On this second day, we began to delve further into our memories recording answers to the questions asked by the group with the aid of the Questions for Analyzing Memory Texts (see Appendix C). I took notes in my researcher journal, recording key questions, observations, similarities, recurring words, emerging themes and significant points. I continued to track emerging categories, adding the information from the second day of inquiry to that of the first. I have compiled the information in the table below (Table 3).

Table 3: Emerging Categories Day 2 (second drafts and discussion)

Emerging Categories	Participants	Salient Quotes
Happy	All	*They are **smiling** and seem to take **pleasure** in the situation (Ndisc2p.2).* *Smiles that made her feel **happy**, home and at peace (Kdisc2p.11).*
Home	All	*It was her first, she had just arrived in the small village she would soon call her **home** (Sdisc2p.5).* *…for four years, this had been her **home** (Kdisc2p.11).*

[15] Passages of conversation between participants are set apart from the main text and identified by italics; participant names are underlined and placed before the quote to indicate the speaker.

Other	All	*She is a bit worried. She knows that she can't refuse, it will look bad […] she **doesn't feel comfortable** taking pictures […] she thinks it **may offend** them (Ndisc2p.1).* *They must find the **Qallunaaq reactions** to their country food that they love so much very finny (Ndisc2p.2).* *She wanted to make her place, be accepted, seen as a teacher and not **another white [person]** that disembarks (Sdisc2p.6).* *…you can't be **the white girl** who intervenes with our white 'eye' [perspective] because there are too many Inuit issues behind it (Sdisc2p.8).* *The Qallunaat, […] **we are the strangers** throughout this story (Ndisc2p.9).*
Liminality	(N, K)	*She was nervous and anxious about returning home […]by leaving the North, **s**he would be **leaving a part of her,** perhaps even the real her, her true self, **here** on the land. **There** in Nunavik (Kdisc2p.11).*
Dualities	All	*She really had those **two visions**, even though she herself wasn't Inuit," (Ndisc2p.5).* *The **juxtaposition between empty and full**, I thought that was interesting (Kdisc2p.18).*
Relationship with students	(K, N, S)	*The children were curious and attentive while at the same time noisy and active. She is **proud** of her students too (Ndisc2p.2).* *She wandered the room and paid particular attention to all the teenagers that she would now teach. That she would **need to create a bond** with. That she would need to build, to teach them without imposing (Sdisc2p.6).* ***Students and teachers were both engaged** in communicating, learning, sharing and participating in cultural activities (Kdisc2p.11).* *The teachers got **a better understanding of their students** and were able to **form a stronger relationship** with them (Kdisc2p.11).*
Community	All	*She throws herself, after all it's their reality and she's **proud to now be a part** of it (Ndisc2p.2).* *The community was **getting together** in the school gym for one of the numerous feasts she would participate in (Sdisc2p.5).* *Everybody felt like they were **a part of this community** […]everyone was helping, everyone was participating, everyone was playing, everyone was learning (Kdisc2p.11).*
Family	All	*She wants to show that she is strong and in control before this audience that makes up her **new family** (Ndisc2p.2).* *her **Northern family** […]They had […]gone through the highs and lows of this experience together (Kdisc2p.11).* *…I'm still looking for that kind of **family feeling**, so in my classes when I'm teaching […] I call my class a **family** (Kdisc2p.15).*
Sharing	all	*They're **sharing** their culture, they're **sharing** their pride of eating and that and **sharing** it with us (Ndsic2p.9).*

		*Everyone was participating in cultural activities, **sharing**, learning, participating, like one big extended family (Kdisc2p.11)*
Food	(K, N, S)	*They must find the Qallunaaq reactions to their **country food** that they love so much very finny (Ndisc2p.2).* *Some older girls were plucking **ptarmigan** for the soup […] the smells of **bannock** being cooked on an open fire wafted up everybody's noses and made everyone hungry. Hungry and eager not just for **food,** but for fun,. For being accepted as they were (Kdisc2p.11).*
Nostalgia	(K, N)	*Smiles that came from the heart, and that would **live in her heart from that day forward** (Kdisc2p.11)* *So everybody was **nostalgic** […] because they knew it was the last picnic with you (Ndisc2p.13).*
Learning/teaching	(K, N, S)	*…at that moment the **teaching** was being done between the Inuit and between themselves because it was more like a **demonstration** for the kids […] but it was really me who was **shown how** to do things too […] like a **teaching of sharing** (Ndisc2p.2).* *Teachers tried their luck while community members **taught** them their 'tricks' for catching fish (Kdisc2p.11).*
Land	All	*It was an annual tradition of the school to drive students **out on the land** for an afternoon of **picnicking** and activities (Kdisc2p.10)* *Her questions quickly give up their place to let her marvel at the [natural] décor. Trees give their place up to the **tundra**, the **rocks**, the emptiness (Mdisc2p.16).*
Culture	All	*What a beautiful moment. She experienced her first **seal buffet** [feast] in the company of the village's youth (Ndisc2p.2)* *…enjoying the fact that they were learning about their **culture** (Kdisc2p.11)*
Language	(K, N, S)	*The excited children already told her that it's **mammartuq** and she would try it (Ndisc2p.2).* *The older ones kept their distance, hardly smiled, made comments that she didn't understand yet. **Language**, that big **barrier** (Sdisc2p.6).* *Although many **different languages** were spoken, and while some elders and teachers didn't speak the same language, everybody understood each other that day (Kdisc2p.11).*
Open	All	*…there were others who **tasted everything**, who were really, not more **open**, but more courageous (Ndisc2p.3).* *[it shows] a pride not just in their culture, but in the fact that you're showing them that you're **open**, that you're interested, that you want to be [there] (Kdisc2p.4).*
Peace	(K, M, N)	*Convinced that she will stay for the next 10 years, she falls asleep **peacefully** (Mdisc2p.16).* *I've made my **peace** with them and I've moved on from there (Ndisc2p.19).*
Questioning	All	***Will** she be able? **Can** she rise to the occasion? **Will** she know how to be open, to taste, to learn?(Sdisc2p.6).* ***Will** she be able to survive isolation? **Will** she be witness to the social problems so often portrayed in the media? **What** will she really teach? (Mdisc2p. 16).*

Student needs	All	*Sometimes there are decisions that are made at school and you have the impression that it's not **the best thing** for certain students…at one point you just swallow it and continue to give the best of yourself **for your students** (Sdisc2p.10)*
Education Policy	All	*…when you're a teacher, in general, it happens often that you have to 'swallow' things that you don't like because […] the **policies** of the school, or something, isn't completely aligned with your values, or you deal with […]things that you can't necessarily provide, or you **don't agree** (Sdisc2p.9).*
Change	(K, M)	*I think it was the first time that I was **discovering** so many **new things** for the first time in my life (Mdisc2p.17).*
Healing	(N, K)	*…having written […] allowed me to **cope** with these feelings […] I've made my peace with them and I've **moved on** from there (Ndisc2p.19).*

Tightly centred on the analysis of the second drafts of our memory texts, this second discussion did not veer off into other directions. Fourteen of the categories from Day 1 (Table 2.2 above) were present in the emerging categories of Day 2 (Table 3 above), namely: *other*, *liminality, dualities, relationship with students*, *community*, *family*, *nostalgia*, *learning*, *teaching*, *land*, *culture, language*, *questioning*, and *education policy*. Also like Day 1, seven of the remaining emerging categories from Day 2, namely: *happy*, *home*, *sharing*, *food*, *open*, *peace* and *student needs* were ultimately added to the definitions of categories (Table 1). Due to the nature of the discussion focused on narrative analysis, the topic of curriculum was not directly discussed and therefore excluded from the emerging categories. Two new categories emerged, namely change and healing. Change, a subject that will be discussed in in the following sections of this chapter, would not become a category, but was included as a part of the definitions in the master list, as it did contribute to the overall results, seeing as our Northern experiences influenced changes in our personal and professional identities. Healing, however, did become a main category as a significant effect of participating in this study, a phenomenon that I discuss in more detail in the following chapters. The discussions of our second drafts reiterated various relationships and dualities such as liminality; and feeling as the other, and the tensions regarding our questions and frustrations with the education system/policy also continued to arise.

Discovering Symbols: Finding the Self

The participants and I also analyzed our memory texts, searching for salient symbols. We noticed that Nathalie's text had been revised to include animals, family, community, culture,

land, food, feeling as the other, relationships with students, questioning, pride and the use of Inuktitut words (rjp.39). Nathalie discovered that acknowledging different learning styles and incorporating the notion of sharing in her teaching and classroom were the main influences from her second text related to her current teaching practice (rjp.39). The symbolism that Nathalie examined was the addition of the Inuktitut language throughout: *the last time I didn't put any Inuit words, and now I used 'Qallunaak' and I also used 'mammartuq'* (disc2p.4). She realized that she had incorporated the Inuit words to symbolize how "good" she felt in becoming a part of the community:

> *mammartuq for them it means it's good [as in delicious], there's no other word to say that it's good … in that situation … the situation itself was good. You know, the event was mammartuq*. (disc2p.9)

The power Nathalie believed that words contain signalled a possible development of thought in her revision process, and reached back to an idea we had discussed in our first meeting:

> *the context of words…that we used there, because we can't really translate them…they're strong, they're powerful, and you couldn't say it in another way…they're like that and they're there to be used like that* (Ndisc1p.18)

A remarkable discovery that Nathalie made was the healing effect offered by the writing process:

> *those feelings I was feeling the first time, remembering my first feast, they were more general emotions, but this exercise, having written it the first time and expressing it, allowed me to cope with those feelings, and writing my second draft, after reflection, I realized that those feelings weren't as strong anymore… that in fact I left my own family to go to the North… I left my boyfriend who is still unhappy that I went back a second year, because I was only supposed to go for one, so he felt like I abandoned him… so that's why I didn't include it in the second one because those feelings were more strong the first time, and I'm ok with them now. I've made my peace with them and I'm moved on from there.* (disc2p.19)

For Sara, revision meant acknowledging the language barrier, the need to be open, the importance of her relationship with students and questioning (rjp.40). The symbol she discovered in her second draft was that of the *suvvalik* – the oil and blueberry mixture she had difficulty swallowing at her first community feast. Through discussion, Sara discovered the *suvalik* turned out to be a hidden metaphor for her frustration with the education system, which she declared as the link to her current teaching practice:

> *the suvalik is, well it's swallowing something even if you have the impression that it's not the right thing to do, or… sometimes in life, a situation arises and you're not super comfortable in it, but you know that you can't let your emotions get the better of you.*

> *Because the situation is bigger than you, you need to see the bigger picture, so you swallow your emotions a bit even if they go down your throat the wrong way…so you swallow it and it goes down all crooked, and it can make you feel badly, but you don't really have the choice because that's it; it's bigger than you. You have to let things be as they are… Sometimes there are decisions that are made at school and you have the impression that it's not the best thing for certain students, for example, but since the whole team is behind the decision, you could try giving your opinion, but at some point, you just have to swallow it and say ok, that's what we're going to do…yes you defend yourself, but at one point you just swallow it and continue to give the best of yourself to your students. I think swallowing something that is hard to take is a part of our job.* (disc2p.7-10)

Sara admitted surprise in realizing how embedded these frustrations were inside of her, to the point that they would come out in her memory text: *My God, I never thought I'd go all the way there with my story!* (disc2p.10). This was a large breakthrough for her, tying a profound moment of self-discovery to the writing/analyzing process.

Melissa revised her text to emphasize how the land, adventure and questioning were significant aspects of her Northern experience (rjp.41). The link to her current teaching practice was "always starting from zero" (as she is constantly moving to new locations for teaching opportunities), accepting change, and gaining confidence (rjp.41). Melissa explained how she used to be very afraid of change, but that teaching in Nunavik allowed her to learn to adapt quickly and feel confidence in new teaching situations:

> *I think it prepares you for when you get to a new place, it's often like that, you start at zero. You have to continue but at the same time, it stays with me even today […] I used to be someone very afraid of change and of new people, and this showed me that it's not so scary.* (disc2p. 18)

The following conversation excerpt shows how Melissa discovered that describing the land changes in her memory text was symbolic of how she began to change:

> Kimberley: *Mel, do you have any symbols in your text?*
> Melissa: *… I think that was the first time that I was discovering so many new things for the first time in my life, so I think it was like a new beginning, that's the biggest theme I think.*
> Kimberley: *Yes, but if I may? If you allow me to?*
> Melissa: *But of course!*
> Kimberley: *I found that when you were describing how the land was changing, like from trees to tundra, I found that, that is a symbol for how you were changing, because you were going through a lot of changing too, just as you were watching the land change, you were going through a change.*
> Melissa: *Yeah, mhm!*

Kimberley: *So I find, if you want to write that down, for me it was really clear, I don't know if anyone else?*
Nathalie: *Yes.*
Sara: *I didn't see it on the spot, but now hearing you talk about it, yes, absolutely.*
Kimberley: *And also, the second thing, you said at one point, and it's again the land, you said that it was 'empty'? Just like your house was, you had no boxes, you had nothing,*
Melissa: *Yeah,*
Kimberley: *But you were full. Full of emotions. So the juxtaposition between empty and full, I thought that was interesting.*
Melissa: *Mhmm…it's a good point,* (dis2p.17-18).

Whereas some participants were able to identify symbols more easily, Melissa and I struggled to find clear symbols in our memory texts. The questions posed and perspectives offered by the other participants helped us dig further into our texts. Helping each other discover the "subject" of our texts highlights the quintessential benefits of having worked together (Hampl, 1999). Without the input of critical friends, the memories would not have been pushed as far.

Finally, in my second draft, the relationships between culture, food, family, sharing, learning, being happy, smiling, home, peace and questioning were emphasized, and in discussion, I further stressed the conscious steps I take in my current practice to create a family and community environment in my classroom (rjp.40-41). Through "storywork," the participants and I uncovered that my entire text was symbolic of a harmonious and idyllic scene, as if depicted in a snow globe (Archibald, 2008, p. ix). The nostalgia I feel for Nunavik and my Northern family was encapsulated in my unconscious attempt at sealing them in a sort of protective bubble:

Nathalie: *You were like in a bubble.*
Kimberley: *Yeah, that's a great word. Everyone was in the same bubble.*
Nathalie: *A love bubble.*
Kimberley: *It makes me, when you said that, it made me think of a snow globe. So like everything perfect is captured in that moment. Even though of course there were things that were not perfect going on, and I was talking a little about that, but I still chose to enjoy that moment for what it was. Anybody else have another question? Maybe I can try and think what my symbol was?*
Sara: *Yeah, that's what I was going to say.*
Kimberley: *Yeah… I don't know if there's any one object, but I think the feeling of family maybe? Family and community was something very important for me because I don't have that here.*
Sara: *Mhm.*
Kimberley: *So that's why that was so precious for me, and that's why I wanted to keep it, like in a snow globe, if I could just keep it forever. And I repeated 'smile' a lot … So that for me, I think that would be my biggest symbol in there, and they're related.*

Sara: *And what's the link that you can make in your teaching now?*
Kimberley: *The link I can make with my teaching in my text would probably be how I'm still looking for that kind of family feeling, so in my classes when I'm teaching, I think I mentioned it last time, I call it a family, you know? I call my classroom a family.*
Nathalie: *Oh yeah, your family meetings.* (disc2p.14-15).

On Snow Globes and Love Bubbles

As discussed in the previous chapter, the first draft of my memory text began as an enumeration of details but quickly became filled with flowery language that I attempted to revise in my second draft. Although I did make an effort to edit the reverent tone, the participants helped me realize that the nostalgia was still heavily present in my second draft. In this section, I offer an intimate discussion of narrative analysis using the two drafts of my memory texts. I offer this sample rather than a close reading of eight texts (four first drafts and four second drafts), for I cannot in good faith make assumptions about or provide a detailed account of the progression of my participants' thinking and writing, as these involve profound internal processes. I therefore discuss my own evolution of thought through the writing process, and of the discoveries that I made upon further reflection.

As discussed in Chapters Three and Five, writing the stories in the third person allows for textual analysis of the memory rather than psychological analysis of the person (Clare & Johnson, 2000; Haug, 2000), which is why both recommend writing with speed and as much detail as possible to avoid censorship and self-editing in the first draft. I was consciously making an effort to heed their advice. In my first draft, I ended up getting completely lost in the memory. In the previous chapter I stated that listing details in my first draft allowed "the conflicting feelings inside of me to come through and to [be stated] more easily, as there was a certain detachment and feeling of freedom that came with writing in the third person" (Chapter Five). While this was true at the time, after much careful reflection, I have discovered this feeling of freedom and detachment to be what Hampl (1999) describes as an inconsistency; a lie; a gap in my knowledge. In fact, by focusing on the outer details and staying on the surface level of the photograph (colours, smells, etc.), I failed to examine the other elements in the memory. When employing flowery language, though, I subconsciously revealed how deeply nostalgic I was for Northern moments such as the one depicted. My participants quickly noticed this, signalling that my first draft was governed by the heart and was in need of revision (Hampl, 2009). Because I was using the details and the 'freedom of writing in the third person' as a false detachment to

censor my true feelings, the piece had not yet "found its true subject; it [was]n't yet about what it wants to be about" (Hampl, 1999, p. 29). Instead of concentrating on one scene and one particular memory to reproduce the detail needed to "subvert the self-censorship that creates harmony in a whole-life story" I did the opposite; I see now that I completely immersed myself in the harmony of the memory of the whole experience and used details to hide (my feelings) behind my words (Haug, 2000, p.157).

Upon examination of my second draft, I can see that re-living and re-experiencing that moment was intensified. In fact, the use of flowery language and nostalgic, romanticized recreation in writing the memory represents an over-identification with Inuit customs and beliefs, which could indeed seem to represent a misappropriation of Inuit culture, rather than a careful and respectful listening and honoring of the Inuit ways of thinking, knowing and doing (Tuck and Yang, 2012). The following excerpt demonstrates how these nostalgic feelings were amplified by the use of language, creating an idyllic Northern scene akin to one depicted in a snow globe: *She tried to capture everything in her mind so that when she needed to escape, she would just need to close her eyes and she would be transported back to this moment. Back to feeling loved, free, happy, surrounded by a large family, the energizing rush of the cold, crisp air, the excitement of skidoos chasing geese, the comfort of a hot cup of tea, and the warmth of the smiles exchanged between everyone. Smiles that came from the heart, and that would live in her heart from that day forward. Smiles that she knew she wouldn't see in the South. Smiles that made her feel happy, home, and at peace*. While I did attempt to eliminate the flowery language and to include significant omissions (such as examples of learning and teaching and the anxieties and fear I was feeling with regards to moving back to the South), the emotional tone found its way back a second time, providing further evidence that I was using details as self-censorship rather than to confront feelings and tensions head-on. I am reminded of Hampl's (1999) words: "we find, in our details … the language of symbol" (p.31). The use of my imagination in creating memory texts filled with symbolic (albeit flowery) language therefore "isn't a lie, but an act of necessity, as the innate urge to locate the truth always is" (p.31).

"It takes courage to write from life experience" advises Narcisse Blood (in Hasebe-Ludt, Chambers & Leggo, 2009, p. xvi). After this lesson in humility, I can now more fully understand and appreciate the wisdom and honesty of his words, and open myself to the vulnerability of exposing my truth. What I had done in my second draft was make the same mistake I had made

in my first draft: I used details and language to create harmony rather than expose the deep grief and doubt I was feeling within. I did not want to reveal my true feelings because I was not ready to confront myself. I was happy with holding on to my grief. I was comfortable with being uncomfortable. And although I do mention my conflicting feelings in passing, the main focus of my text is how wonderful and perfect everything was in that moment.

Rather than correct my censorship, I got lost in nostalgia for my Northern family, and ended up, as Haug (2000) warned, with a psychological analysis of myself rather than a textual analysis of my memory. Getting lost in nostalgia while writing this memory text made it difficult for me to clearly identify any significant symbols. My participants helped me discover the symbol of the snow globe to signify not any one particular object in my text, but a metaphor for my text as a whole. Through getting lost in nostalgia, however, I found symbolism in *why* the past appeared the way it did (Mitchell and Reid-Walsh, 2002). The tensions that existed between my calculated, detached listing of details and free-flowing, flowery language, mirror and reflect the unsettling feeling of living betwixt and between; of living neither here nor there; of struggling with my location as a *Qallunaat* writing about my experiences in an Inuit world. (Pierce 2007; Strong-Wilson, 2005). Constantly streaming in and out of both worlds, conscious/unconscious, Inuit/*Qallunaat*, and past/present, the competing language in my memory texts pointed toward my difficulties in combining two types of knowledge: scientific and storied, and Western and Indigenous, and the tensions in writing about them as a non-Indigenous researcher. Moreover, my resistance to exposing my true feelings for fear of losing the memories and encountering my true self, lead me to write texts that though truthful, were not entirely honest. Yet, as Hampl (1999) opined, they were "an act of necessity … to locate the truth" (p.31). Unconsciously, I was expressing my deep need to forget that I actually did leave and that Nunavik is no longer my home… along with the difficult realization that it never was.

Writing that previous sentence, and especially its last words, was the first time I openly admitted this to myself. And it hurt. A lot. I cried for several minutes and yet at the same time, I felt a sense of relief and peace come over me. I am reminded of Nathalie's experience of healing that came from releasing and coping with her feelings (mentioned earlier in this chapter) and of Eppert's (2003) remembering to forget (see Chapter Three). The act of remembering has allowed me to forget and forgive, going beyond the trauma and the pain and guilt of leaving Nunavik (Eppert, 2003). After eight years of having moved back, including five years of doctoral studies,

the last two of which were spent ‘marinating’ in my experience by deeply re-living all of the emotions and memories that were re-visited through the collection and analysis of data, I can only now begin to forgive myself for leaving. It was a long and difficult process, but I can now begin to forgive myself for struggling to readjust to my own home and family; I can now begin to forgive myself for being nostalgic; to forgive myself for living in the past; to forgive myself for not allowing myself to move on; to ‘forget’ my Northern family and begin a new one with my husband (and hoped for child); to allow myself to live here and now while remembering the Northern experience, but not being trapped in it. Most importantly, I can now begin to forgive my personal settler history, which has allowed me to take active steps towards reconciliation as an Indigenous ally. I am no longer living inside the love bubble-snow globe sealed by a protective shield. I am now able to look back on my Northern experience from outside the glass wall. I can pick it up, turn it upside down, unsettle it, watch the snow fall, but then set it back on the ledge without the need to cling to the memory so desperately. Now, too in being shared, the people and memories inside the snow globe are set free: a source of inspiration for the future rather than reasons to remain stuck in the past. As Chambers (2004) writes,

> Narratives are crucibles that hold the events, as well as the pathos, logos and ethos at work in each story. Through stories teachers /researchers record significant events, and like the originative meaning of re-cord, through stories those significant events are passed back through the heart again. Logos invites the researcher to dwell with the stories, as she did with the mistakes, to tease out the significance of the story for herself, and then for others who might read it. To accomplish this, a writer must craft each narrative, seeing the story and its meaning again and anew, with each revision. You become a writing apprentice, learning how best to tell the stories that must be told. In so doing you create or find the potency of each story for you, the narrator, and for your reader; its power to transform the writer and the reader. (p. 24)

Word Columns 1 and 2

Following the sharing and analysis of our second drafts, the participants decided to create word columns on their own time. In an attempt to reach a higher level of abstraction, the word columns not only helped us examine memory more deeply, they were also useful as aids and inspirational prompts in the composition of our poems. It is important to note that Melissa did

not share her word columns with me, so the tracking of recurring words from each category in our word columns is limited to three out of four participants, namely Nathalie, Sara, and myself. Despite Melissa's missing data, I was able to discover common words/themes for each of the categories in our three first word columns. I have compiled the information into a table below (Table 4).

Table 4: Combined Word Column 1

Feelings	Actions	Doubts	Tensions	Senses
Excitement	Smiling	Challenge	Language	Taste
Fun	Sharing		Differences	
Eager	Participating		Uncomfortable	
	Tasting			
	Observing			
	Demonstrating			

I encountered difficulty in tracking similar word patterns. There was only one recurring theme that appeared and it was the word "stress" in the "feelings" column (rjp.62-63). This was to be expected, as the object of the second word columns was to avoid the words used in our first columns to allow for a higher degree of abstraction and a deeper dive into memory (see Chapters Three and Five). Because our second word columns were constructed to help understand the self, and because our thinking processes are unique, I was pleased to discover that we had all used different words in our second columns. The fact that we had curated lists of original vocabulary demonstrated that we had truly reflected ourselves and on our selves, using our own subconscious vernacular to examine, interpret and define our personal memories. While the second word columns were vastly different, they were critical aids in the crafting of our poems, as they offered ideas and concepts that perhaps might not have been explored otherwise.

After having shared our poems, we discussed how the word columns were helpful to our writing process. As noted in my researcher journal, the word columns helped with maintaining focus and selecting significant words to be incorporated in our poems (rjp.45). For Melissa, they functioned as a starting point in her poetry writing process, as well as allowed her to express "everything she wanted to say" (rjp.45). The word columns helped Nathalie and Melissa understand their feelings and thoughts more profoundly and see them in a different way than had they not had the opportunity to experiment with different words (rjp.45). Sara's experience was

different. She explained how it had been a long time since she had been bound by writing constraints as being a freelance writer, she chooses her own subjects and methods (disc3p.61). She felt confined by them and by the obligation to use them, however, she ultimately admitted that the word columns helped her maintain focus; that her poem is an authentic representation of herself and is typical of her writing style: *I still found my voice and my way of writing, my style in there, even if the process of writing the poem was different than it usually is* (disc3p. 61).

In the end, the columns helped create a varying array of artistry and stimulating collection of poems that displayed personal, professional, and collaborative learning influenced by our experiences, informed by our memories and shaped by our journeys. Most importantly, the columns allowed us to create poems that were articulated through the heart, as a result of having listened to the voices of our Inuit students and colleagues.

Day 3: Participant Poems

On the third day of inquiry, the participants and I shared and discussed the poems we had created on our own time; the poems that were generated with the aid of the word columns, memory texts, photographic prompts, and influenced by our discussions. These sources of inspiration, along with our collective memory work and own personal reflections, allowed us to gather our most significant feelings and thoughts about our Northern teaching experiences. Although we only had two days of discussion prior to creating our poems, they were spread over two months (September-October 2017). Spreading out the discussions allowed us the time and space that we needed to sit with our thoughts and reflect on our discussions and memory work. As the participants and I commented on the second day, our first discussion had stayed on our minds for a very long time (disc2p.1). On our third day, we noted the same lingering thoughts after our second discussion (disc3p.60), given time to digest all of the burning issues and questions that had been brought up during our discussions. These issues remained a central preoccupation, as the following excerpt demonstrates:

> Sara: *I think that I've dived more into the North in the last month, even if I think about it often, now I think it was like, deep in the North, for a few weeks.*
> Kimberley: *Yeah, so I think like the whole process is going to continue for a bit.*
> Nathalie: *Oh yeah.*
> Kimberley: *Like we're not going to forget about it right away,*

Nathalie: *I'm asking just like that, but would you have forgotten it if we hadn't had our 3 meetings?*
Kimberley: *No, but I think*
Nathalie: *It wouldn't have been as profound*. (disc3p.60)

My participants and I have been back in Southern Quebec from three to eight years. Despite having returned, the memories of the North continue to present themselves as a regular part of our every day lives. As Sara explained and we all concurred, *the North is always there, I always talk about it, every week or almost, I think about it very often…I have the feeling that it's not over* (disc3p.3). To this, Nathalie added *it's been a long time since I've been back but despite everything, it's still a part of our daily lives, because of [our contacts on] social media but also because of our present teaching experiences* (disc3p.23). Our individual thoughts and reflections throughout the years, coupled with our collective memory work and poetic inquiry, indicated intense, thoughtful, patient and careful listening in seeking "broad levels of information and understanding" on a subject near and dear to our hearts (Tanaka, 2016, p. xv) As Tanaka (2016) states, "Prayer, deep reflection, patience, and 'waiting for the second thought' are regularly practiced in Indigenous decision making" (p. xv). The poems that we generated are a result of having waited with open hearts and listening with 'three ears' for our 'second thought'; or perhaps more succinctly, the poems are our 'second thought' (Archibald, 2008; Tanaka, 2016).

In the last section of the previous chapter, I presented our poems in their original languages, so as to honour the original wording, pausing and phrase breaks of the poems (Cahnmann-Taylor 2009; Prendergast, 2009). In the following section, I present our 'second thought', discussed on our third day of inquiry.[16]

'Second Thought': Pushing the Memory and the Poetry Writing Process

In an effort to present the memories of our experiences of living and teaching in Nunavik fully and accurately in a relatively brief format, especially given the wide breadth and large depth of our concerns, the words we selected and the symbols and metaphors we chose to portray them with hold a considerable amount of meaning. The individual words contained substantial personal significance, but like the stones in an *inukshuk*, they also worked together and depended on each other in providing a holistic and balanced representation of our cumulative inquiry. The

[16] Lines of poetry appear in brackets and are italicized. My English translations of French lines of poetry appear in square brackets, and are italicized, next to the original French lines of poetry written by the participants.

following discussion excerpt depicts, in part, how we navigated the unworn path of our exploratory journey through the poetry writing process:

> Sara: *Personally I didn't know where to start. I had my words, and it was long before I knew what I wanted to say. Like I said before, I found that the verbs were super important, and I wanted to start from there but … that's what I found hard. I stared at my computer for a while before it came out.*
> Melissa: *I would say a bit like you Sara, for me too it was a bit long … But once I got into it and I looked at my words, it came out all by itself…*
> Nathalie: *… I found it really hard to make the columns. The first column was easy, but after that, writing a synonym so that it would still represent what I wanted to say but without really talking about what my text said, it gave another meaning to my words … And I thought I would have a lot of difficulty writing my poem, but in the end … it only took about twenty minutes … I wanted to use the most words as possible. I wanted to use as least other 'outside' words [words not included in my columns] as possible. So it's very jerky my poem but it's because it's mostly [composed of] all the words from my columns.*
> Kimberley: *I had both my columns in front of me … I knew that I wanted to somehow represent the conflicting feelings that I had about home and leaving and staying, and I found that they were really extreme opposites, so I knew I wanted to bring that in there somehow, and so when I started writing the poem, I was just envisioning, cause this is something I would do a lot, look outside with a cup of tea or coffee … one of my favourite times was in the morning, like Saturday morning or Sunday morning when everything is so quiet and so still, you know?*
> Sara: *Yeah.*
> Kimberley: *And there's just the snow there, and that's where I would do a lot of thinking, so I went with that image in my mind, and then as soon as I had the first line it was like I was back there in the window and everything sort of just came out, so it went quickly … But I think if it weren't for the second word column, I would never have been able to write that poem. Like, if I would have based it only of the first one … I don't think that it would have been as strong necessarily, or I don't think it would have gone as deep ... I was kind of hesitant about the second column being that much different than the first…but when I started writing the second column, it got deeper, and I was like ok, wow …*
> Nathalie: *You saw the significance.*
> Kimberley: *Yeah, and it's like you're removing yourself from it in a way so it allows you to go deeper somehow, but I was a little surprised about some of my second word columns, there was a lot of like heavy feelings in there, and I had to keep reminding myself that this is about teaching, and I found I was always going back to personal feelings … I had to keep reminding myself to go back to teaching, so I'm not sure that my poem has much to do with teaching…*
> Nathalie: *Yeah, but it's not just teaching that we did there. It's a lot more than that.*
> Sara: *Yeah, and you're a complete human being, I mean you don't become a robot when you teach.*
> Kimberley: *No of course not.*

Sara: *And the feelings that you have, and the experience as a whole clearly has an influence on how teach in your class too … You know, we can't disassociate the person from the teacher, it's impossible.*
Nathalie: *…Yes because the personal[aspect]influences all of your experience, even if it's not just teaching, it's who you are as a base that made it possible for you to teach and stay there for years.*
Kimberley: *That's a great point.* (disc3p.10-12)

Taken out of context, our poems may not appear to focus on teaching. Upon deeper reflection, however, it becomes evident that the poems reflect our experiences of living in Nunavik, which are undeniably tied to our teaching. Teaching was what motivated us to go North, and therefore occupied the majority of our time. When I write *perplexed in grief/for all she was/and she had learned*, I am indicating fearing the loss of the teaching strategies, methods, skills and techniques that I learned in Nunavik, including understanding the importance of culture, language, strong teacher-student relationships, different learning styles, openness, flexibility, patience and creativity. When I state *apart becomes/a part*, I am emphasizing that teaching in the North entails the vital role of participating as an active member of the community. When I mention the words *cross cultural*, I am not only referring to the exchange of cultures that takes place between *Qallunaat* and Inuit, but am also alluding to curriculum, and the cross-cultural competencies we are required to teach as outlined in the Quebec Education Program.

I have compiled a list of themes and categories from our poems that became evident in analysis and discussion (see Table 5). I am no longer calling the patterns and themes 'emerging,' as I had been prior to the writing of poems. The poems are the final written artifact and represent the culmination of our journey, corroborating the categories in the master list.

Table 5: Main Categories Day 3 (Poems and discussion)

Participant	Categories
Kimberley	*Questioning, fears, nostalgia, land, language, community, family, other, home, liminality, change, duality, learning, curriculum, social justice*
Melissa	*Family, liminality, land, change, home, happiness, learning, community, duality, questioning, other, belonging, acceptance, social justice*

Nathalie	*Home, liminality, family, belonging, acceptance, language, questioning, community, change, tensions, duality, other, food, teaching, relationship with students, education policy, social justice*
Sara	*Doubts, fears, questioning, relationship with students, learning, culture, language, home, liminality, community, curriculum, being open, dualities, land, teaching, learning, education policy, social justice*

All of the participants mention or allude to four main categories or defining characteristics in our poems, and/or discussions centred around our poems, namely: *community*, *home*, *liminality*, and *social justice*. Evidence of eight categories or defining characteristics exists in three out of the four participant poems: *questioning, land, language, family*, *feeling like the other*, *change*, *dualities*, and *learning*. *Curriculum*, *belonging, acceptance, relationships with students, education policy,* and *teaching* (including teaching style) were detected in two of the four poems. Finally, other topics such as *nostalgia*, *happiness, tensions*, *being open*, *food, doubts*, *fears* and *culture* were incorporated into the poems by at least one participant. Thus, when combined, sixteen of the twenty-two master categories appear in the poems themselves, and the remaining six master categories (*impact/influence, teaching methods and skills, reverse culture shock, methodology*, *research,* and *healing*) arose in conversation and were discussed at length on our third – and what we believed was our final – day of inquiry.

Three Day Discussion: Summary

The four participant poems were the result of patient listening with open hearts and minds, practicing the principles of *storywork,* and attending to research as ceremony. We examined words, themes and patterns that 'pushed our memories' and offered new knowledge of how our past teaching experiences in Nunavik remain an integral part of our current practices in Southern Quebec. We also identified common parallels that united our collective learning on the subject. In this section, I present the results of the three day inquiry into our past experiences, and its reverberations in our current teaching practices.

Table 6 below demonstrates the evolution of thought that occurred throughout the three day inquiry. The table below represents the entirety of our collective inquiry process, beginning with the key words from our photographic prompts (red), moving into the key themes from the

first drafts of our memory texts (orange), followed by the emerging categories from the total of Day 1, including the findings of our photo prompts, first drafts and first discussion (yellow), continued by the emerging categories from Day 2, including the findings from our second drafts and second discussion (green), progressing with the common recurring words, patterns and themes explored in both word columns 1 and 2 (blue), and finally, ending with the main categories discovered in our poems and third discussion (purple). In this way, I believe the gradient colour scheme helps demonstrate the symbiotic relationship of the emerging categories and how they evolved.

It is an astonishing coincidence that the name of the school that Sara, Melissa and I taught at together in Nunavik translates to 'rainbow' in English. My choice to use a rainbow colour scheme was not a conscious reflection of the school name; in fact, I had not made the connection until writing the previous paragraph. This would seem to be another instance of Spirit speaking to me through the data and of having performed ceremony… \0/

I have listed each category in the body of the table (shaded in grey) with the first initial of the participant from whom the word/pattern/theme originated. Furthermore, in the bottom section of the table (shaded in pink) I have identified the total number of categories and defining characteristics. I have provided a summary of the number of common words/themes/patterns used by the participants. For example, the pink shaded section of the red column (key words from the photographic prompts Day 1), demonstrates that there was a total of thirteen categories. Of these, eight were included as main categories. I also provide ratios to demonstrate the number of participants that mentioned common categories. Continuing with the example of the red column, one of the categories, namely land, was mentioned by all four participants and is demonstrated by the ratio 1(4), to show that one category was discussed by all four participants. Similarly, three participants spoke about three of the same categories, namely *community, food, and feeling like the other* 3(3); two participants discussed the two categories of *learning* and *culture*, 2(2); and one participant (not necessarily the same participant) talked about seven other categories: *happy, home, liminality, relationship with students, reverse culture shock, sharing and accepting* 7(1).

Table 6: Progression of Thought Day 1 – Day 3

Key Words Photographic Prompts (Day 1)	Key Themes Memory Text (Day 1)	Emerging Categories (Day 1)	Emerging Categories (Day 2)	Combined Word Columns (Day 3)	Categories in Poems (Day 3)
Happy, land, community, food (K) *Pride, the land, culture, food, feeling like the other (M)* *Home, liminality, relationship with students, learning, community, culture, land, learning, feeling as the other, reverse culture shock (S)* *Culture, learning, community, food, sharing, learning, land, feeling as the other and accepting her otherness (N)*	*Land, nostalgia, home, family, happiness, culture, community, learning, sharing, food, happiness, questioning, liminality, questioning, dualities (K)* *Community, feast, family, culture, food, sharing, learning, dualities, being open, accepting, questioning (N)* *Community, feast, food, language, culture, being open, learning, relationship with students (S)* *Journey, peace, home, happiness, dualities (M)*	*Happy (K,M)* *Home (all)* *Other (all)* *Liminality (K, S, N)* *Dualities (all)* *Relationships with students (all)* *Community (all)* *Family (K, N)* *Sharing (all)* *Food (all)* *Nostalgia (K, N, S)* *Learning/Teaching (all)* *Land (all)* *Culture (all)* *Language (K, S, M)* *Being open (all)* *Peace (K, M)* *Questioning (K, N)* *Student needs (S, M)* *Curriculum (N, S, M)* *Education Policy (S, M)*	*Happy (all)* *Home (all)* *Other (all)* *Liminality (N, K)* *Dualities (all)* *Relationship with students (K, N, S)* *Community (all)* *Family (all)* *Sharing (all)* *Food (K, N, S)* *Nostalgia (K, N)* *Learning/Teaching (K, N, S)* *Land (all)* *Culture (all)* *Language (K, N, S)* *Being open (all)* *Peace (K, M, N)* *Questioning (all)* *Student needs (all)* *Education policy (all)* *Change (K, M)* *Healing (N, K)*	*Excitement, fun, eager, smiling, sharing, participating, tasting, observing, demonstrating, challenge, language, differences, uncomfortable, taste, stress*	*Questioning, fears, nostalgia, land, language, community, family, other, home, liminality, change, duality, learning, curriculum, social justice (K)* *Family, liminality, land, change, home, happiness, learning, community, duality, questioning, other, belonging, acceptance, social justice (M)* *Home, liminality, family, belonging, acceptance, language, questioning, community, change, tensions, duality, other, food, teaching, relationship with students, education policy social justice (N)* *Doubts, fears, questioning, relationship with students, learning, culture, language, home, liminality, community, curriculum, being open, dualities, land, teaching, learning, education policy. Social justice (S)*
13 total: 8/22 main categories; 5 definitions; 1(4); 3(3); 2(2); 7(1)	**17 total**: 9/22 main categories; 8 definitions; 1(4); 4(3); 6 (2); 6(1)	**22 total**: 15/22 main categories; 7 definitions; 11(4); 4(3); 6(2); 1(1)	**22 total**: 15/22 main categories;7 definitions; 13(4); 5(3); 4(2)	**15 total** common or recurring words, themes and/ or patterns	**26 total**: 16/22 main categories; 10 definitions; 4(4); 8(3); 6(2); 8 (1)

To summarize, the total categories increased from thirteen at the beginning of the first day, to twenty-six by the end of the third day (purple column). The number of common categories discussed increased from one on the first day (*land*) to four on the third day (*home, community, liminality,* and *social justice*). While one participant (not necessarily the same participant) talked about seven categories on the first day and eight on the third day, each participant shared and added her views and opinions to most, if not all, of the categories. As the following excerpt of conversation shows, while there were some differences, there were more similarities that marked our increasingly collective thinking in responding to the research question:

> Kimberley: *What are some of the repeated or recurrent themes in our poems?*
> Sara: *Well there is feeling at home.*
> Kimberley: *Yeah.*
> Nathalie: *Family.*
> Sara: *Yeah. The four really had the impression of being home.*
> Nathalie: *But sadness too, and doubt. The doubt of how am I going to do this? How is this going to go?*
> Kimberley: *Ok, so those are similarities, are there any differences? Like obvious Differences … omissions? Anything that we didn't talk about or talked about differently?*
> Sara: *I feel like we all have the same outlook regarding the North … us four, I really have the impression that yes, we all had different experiences, but our discourse still unifies us. There hasn't been any real difference of opinions.* (disc3p.40-41)

In the first meeting, we discovered links between our teaching in Nunavik and our current practices, here in Southern Quebec, despite having returned from the North for numerous years. For me, it was using the five senses (imagery) in writing and referring to my class as a family; for Nathalie, the emphasis on groupwork and the benefits she attributes to participating in group activities with her students in an attempt to create a feeling of community; for Sara, the openness in adapting (to new teaching situations), catering to different student learning styles, and the feeling that she's again the other; and for Melissa, the relationship with students, and using her stories of the North as a 'hook' or 'ice-breaker' when meeting new groups of students (see *Day 1: Memory Texts* in this chapter).

In the second meeting, after having collectively analyzed the hidden symbols present in the second drafts of our memory texts, the connections made to our current teaching practices were revised. I further realized the conscious steps I take in my current practice to create a family and community environment in my classroom; Nathalie rediscovered acknowledging different

learning styles, and incorporating the notion of sharing in her teaching and classroom; while for Sara, it was the ground-breaking discovery she made about how ingrained and consuming her frustrations are with the education system and its policies. For Melissa, the link to her current teaching practice became "always starting from zero" (as she is constantly moving to new locations for teaching opportunities), accepting change, and gaining confidence (see *Day 2: Memory Text Draft 2, Word Columns 1 and 2* in this chapter).

In the third meeting, I further mentioned the constant questions that I ask myself regarding my teaching practice that is related to the subject of teacher identity in general. Melissa, with regards to her upcoming new teaching job, noted key words in her poem were equally descriptive of her current situation: *change, advancing, imagining the worst, I think those words/phrases are my experience that is coming up. They're very related* (disc3p.29). Nathalie explained:

> *My poem is a lot about my personal experience in the North, but the words that are there describe my current teaching experience here very well. Difficult experience, sharing the stress, expressing emotions, worry, impatience, looking strong but feeling shaken, doubting, moving (I moved classes 3 times), repeating, lose control but you continue, having fun, all the words talk a lot about my teaching here in the South…mostly all the words can apply, actually, to teaching right now.* (disc3p.30)

Nathalie also mentioned that the North allowed her to discover the importance being more flexible with herself:

> *There's a letting go that I allow myself and…I don't know if I'd still be in teaching if I hadn't gone North. With this letting go I allow myself, you know there are so many teachers that abandon the profession in their first years because they find it too stressful and they put too much on their shoulders, and the feat is too great… well I don't know, for me if it's not working … it's not a big deal, it can wait … and that's what the North taught me.* (disc3p.31)

To this idea of the importance of mental health, Sara and I added:

> Sara: *Yes, me too I allow myself to go over my bank [of sick days]. Even if I take 8, well I take 8.*
> Kimberley: *That's it, that's what they're there for. If not [we'll go] coocoo!*
> Nathalie: *Of course, it's health first.*
> Kimberley: *So, prevent burnout.*
> Nathalie: *Yup.*
> Kimberley: *…for me what I learned also is kind of along the same lines as not being so rigid, and sometimes [the lesson is]not working, and in the middle of it, put your stuff away, and we're going to do something else, and that's ok.* (disc3p.31-32)

Nathalie and Melissa also discussed how they use their nostalgia for Nunavik as a tool in their current teaching:

> Melissa: *Nostalgia is memories, it's a reserve like I was saying before, a strategy like, 'oh what did I do then, oh that was fun,' it doesn't mean it's always applicable to our teaching reality today, but it provides inspiration, I think it's a big conductor, it's a tool I think.*
> Kimberley: *Yeah, totally.*
> Nathalie: *You're right. I used the activity… you know the game where it's like a race where when you get a double you go to the middle? I used that in my class and we did math activities and I have them play it and I call it Inuit dice, and it's a strategy like you [Melissa] say, [in my] tool box…*
> Melissa: *And sometimes just remembering, or sometimes just telling a story, you know if a student tells me he broke his skidoo, well 'you know what, me too,' and it clicks. It could create a connection and often when I sub they always ask, 'where do you come from, what do you do, what do you teach?' I often end up talking about it and it really captivates them, the older and younger ones. I find that it's there, and since it's there, why not use it if it can be useful?* (disc3p.68-69)

Finally, Sara discussed how starting with the students, putting their needs first, and being more creative are all ways she plans to integrate her learning from the three day inquiry. Sara and Nathalie also reiterated the importance of building strong teacher-student relationships:

> Sara: *I think that in my poem you can feel more my hesitation and questioning… and I remember that in the North I would doubt myself a lot, like, was I teaching the right way, because we do it all the time as teachers, but I found that in the North it took up a larger portion because of the culture difference, or the language barrier, because we are Whites that came…I remember being so afraid of arriving with my gros sabots [two left feet] and being like "I'm going to teach you things"… that I wanted to… pass by the back door, you know? [I needed to] learn to find my place before to then be able to teach after that, the way I wanted to teach. Because it's the same thing here, if you have no relationship with the students you can't teach.* (disc3p.18-19)

Social Justice Implications

Social justice is present throughout the entirety of our third discussion, and in fact, when I look back, I can find glimpses of social justice discourse beginning to take form in our previous discussions. The ideas and notions put forth in the third discussion signal that it is a significant result of having participated in this study; of having waited for the 'second thought'; of having listened patiently in order to form an opinion (Tanaka, 2016). The category of social justice is one that I believe makes an important and timely contribution to the field of Indigenous studies, specifically in the area of relations between non-Indigenous and Indigenous peoples, and in the

field of curriculum theory, particularly in the areas of integrating Indigenous perspectives into curriculum design, and collaboration between Native and non-Native teachers.

Spreading Awareness

One category that developed under the umbrella of social justice is the desire that the participants and I expressed with regards to spreading awareness in the form of attempting to dispel negative views about Indigenous, and particularly, Nunavik Inuit populations. The following sections demonstrate our efforts to quell these incorrect and hurtful perceptions in our personal relationships and acquaintances, as well as in our professional circles.

> Nathalie: *But I think we also hear a lot of negative.*
> Sara: *…Because that's what the media shows.*
> Kim: *…That's the problem. We hear only the negative.*
> Nathalie: *…Well, there's a negative part but that's not what we remember.*
> Sara: *We don't have our heads in the sand, we saw the issues,*
> Nathalie: *But that's not what got our attention.*
> Sara: *No.*
> Nathalie: *That's not what built our story either.*
> Sara: *No, because we wouldn't have stayed so long if it was just that.*
> Kim: *Exactly.*
> Nathalie: *And we wouldn't miss it either if it was just that.*
> Sara: *No. The North wouldn't live in us if it was just that…And it's easy with our colonial mentality to put the blame on the Inuit and on the First Nations because 'they're like this' and because 'they're like that.' Come on, stop saying that for no reason.* (disc3p.41-43)

The topic of spreading awareness and attempting to correct misinformation and derogatory stereotypical views about Indigenous communities, however, did not limit itself to our families and friends.

Spreading Support

As the following excerpts of conversation show, our interests in social justice evolved into an affirmation of our stance as supporters, making its way into our teaching practice via the platform of our classrooms, and our potential possible transformative power as educators.

> Sara: *I had written to Mel last year when I knew that I was going to teach grade 5. I wanted to start a correspondence project with her students…So I think it's always there to want to put my students in contact with that reality. Is it nostalgia or is it the desire to want to open their horizons on First Nations peoples? To get out of the vision that we have all the time…we've been neighbours for 400 hundred years and we don't know each other. So I don't know if it comes from nostalgia or from my deep love for the North that I*

want to transmit [knowledge] and to show that it's different from what we normally hear. (disc3p.68)

And further:

> Nathalie: *I built a family with the people and there's always a part of my heart that, when I see things on the news, or when I hear stories that make me profoundly sad, I ask myself, what are we going to do? Not to help them, but how can I say? I lived a bit of their lives, but not a lot, but, the concern will always stay with me…*
> Sara: *I think that I will always be sensitive to the Indigenous cause, but bigger than [Nunavik] the Indigenous cause in general. I read a lot about the raped, missing, and killed women. Those 2000 women that we don't know where they are, I always get a pinch in my heart when I see an Inuk walking my street in Montreal, there's a love that I have for the First Nations that developed while being there. I don't know them all, I don't have a relationship with all of them, but it opened my eyes. Like I said before, I can't believe that we have been living together for 400 years and that we don't know each other and that we don't learn from them, and we seclude them to reserves and they're so far away even if they're sometimes physically close.* (disc3p.74)

Integrating Indigenous perspectives into the current southern Quebec curriculum played a significant role in our desires to contribute to social justice. The next section explores tensions regarding our non-Indigeneity within Indigenous contexts.

Social Justice Education

Despite our intentions to integrate Indigenous perspectives in our teaching, we felt conflicted about our place as non-Natives and questioned if we had the ethical right to speak on subjects of Indigenous concern.

> Kim*: …I feel confused and conflicted inside of me as to should I say something or not?*
> Sara: *Will you take the place of someone else, is it up to you to speak?*
> Kim: *Exactly, I don't want to speak for someone else, but I also don't want to speak about someone else, so I have trouble with my place in it…*
> Melissa: *I would say that despite everything we could do, despite that we sometimes feel mad because there are comments in the media or whatever it may be, there's like a sense of powerlessness that is there. I feel like despite everything good that we would want to do, there will always be that shadow of, that sort of limit that, yes we want good, yes we know how it is, yes we experienced, it, but despite everything, what remains is that we're not, we don't belong…Even if we really want to, we'll always have that sense of powerlessness in any case.*
> Sara: *We're still outsiders.* (disc3p.74-75)

That we remain outsiders and continue to question our belonging (whether here in Southern Quebec or there in Nunavik) testifies that we are always reminded, or remind ourselves, of our

liminality. To borrow an expression from the Spanish language, we are like 'the fish that eats its own tail,' signifying that this cycle of belonging and not belonging, neither here nor there, has us going around in a never-ending circle, replaying segments from this iterative loop. This constant feeling of liminality, and our efforts to break out of it, or live with it, is perhaps the heaviest and most problematic effect of our post-Northern identities, affecting many aspects of our lives. We felt the need to recreate memories from Nunavik so as to feel at home in our present and, might I emphasize, our *original* Southern Quebec lives – yet its presence eluded us. As Nathalie proclaimed, *it's important that feeling of being united and I don't find it here* (disc1p.16). Or, as Sara suggested, *there was a real spirit of teamwork and everyone going in the same direction, which you find very rarely in schools here* (disc1p.23). And as I stated, *I'm still looking for that kind of family feeling, so in my classes when I'm teaching…I call my class a family* (disc2p.15).

Outcomes of Participation

The participants and I also discovered some interesting and unexpected outcomes of having participated in this study. To begin with, the participants stated how participating in this research contributed to their professional development:

> Nathalie: *…the whole study [helped me] realize…to what point it affected me and still affects me, and will continue to affect me for a long time…*
> Sara: *It made me realize to what point my teaching is influenced by my experience in the North. And to what point I want to guide my students here as I did there, and I had a lot of frustrations in [Nunavik with the school board]…but I'm realizing that I live that here too…it made me realize to what point I am frustrated to be a teacher in a system that doesn't think of the students first, that thinks of the evaluations first, or of the final results…It really highlights how I question a lot of things in the education system.* (disc3p.48)

Melissa added that participating in the research allowed her to discover that the teaching skills she learned in Nunavik will continue to be applied in her current practice. For Melissa, *that's the really big learning, or what doing this [study] showed me* (disc3p.49). Nathalie also explained how participating had a direct influence in her current teaching practice, as she was inspired by our discussions to introduce the notion of being a family to her students:

> Nathalie: *…I realized that I thought it but that I never said it…and that was because of our meetings, so just to have put it in words and to have mentioned it to them…it felt good to tell them.*
> Kim: *Did they understand?*

> Nathalie: *I think so, they're still young…but I'm going to continue to insist on that. But I got goosebumps and it really touched me…I don't know if it's because adults were watching me trying something new in teaching, or because it's emotional, because it's my family and you are my family, and it's quite something… It completes the circle too, to come back and to put this in place. But professionally, our 3 days have really changed me a lot in the sense that I question education and why am I doing this, and everything that you all have said, it resonated with me and it made me feel like, 'oh my God I'm not the only one thinking this', because I think that in education we're often alone in our thoughts despite the fact that we have workshops, but it's rare that we have the opportunity to talk more deeply about its significance. Very, very beneficial these 3 days for me!* (disc3p.56-57)

Sara and Melissa also explained how participating had a direct influence on their current teaching practice:

> Sara: *Like I said before, I feel like it has highlighted all the questions that I have with regards to the system of education, and how we teach, and how we see each other […] it makes me want to make my students discover the North, and to make parallels between them and the Inuit….*
> Melissa: *It put me back in contact with the big questions of why we do this, and now that a new job is coming up, it's really that. I think that it reconnected me to these important questions and reflections.*
> Sara: *I think that I'll have the stakes of education more in mind when I build learning and evaluation situations, I think I already do but I think I'll probably try to do make it start even more from the students than I do now… So maybe a combination of all the big stakes that came out in our discussions, plus I have the feeling that I will be more flexible in the way that I will teach. Maybe also more creative.* (dis3p.58)

The participants also revealed how participating in this study was instrumental to their healing processes. The writing process helped Nathalie and myself achieve a substantial amount of release from feelings of grief associated with the loss for our Northern families, for instance. Nathalie expressed and we all agreed that:

> *I maybe didn't realize at what point it wasn't closed [finished] in my soul […]I think that the first discussion we had, and the first draft that we did, [when] I broke down, was a bit liberating at the same time. It did me immensely good, and after that it was easier. It's emotional, but it's less heavy I would say*. (disc3p.48)

Moreover, the participants also discussed how participating helped them hone/develop writing skills and confidence:

> Melissa: *Well at the beginning I wasn't sure that I was the right candidate for you…but with the method, it demonstrated itself to be very revealing, and starting from the picture, it awoke things…and it revealed a little writer side that I didn't know I had.*

> Nathalie: *A bit like Mel, I'm going to admit that I almost refused, but I made a parallel to the North that allowed me to get over my shyness…writing used to give me a lot of stress too, [but] when you let yourself go and you do it as you want, when it's sincere and it comes from you, well there's no judgement and with you that's what I find too, is the non-judgement, and well, I've gained confidence…The method behind it is important because like Melissa said…it was very revealing and efficient.*
> Sara: *Yeah, it had been a long time since I had writing constraints…when I write poetry it comes more from an emotion that I need to let out, whereas here there were steps that were very boxed in, but when I read it, I can still feel the emotion behind it.*
> Kim: *So even though you were uncomfortable,*
> Sara: *It took me out of my comfort zone for sure, and in any situation it's important to get out of your bubble and try something different.* (disc3p.60-62)

Finally, the participants offered ideas for further research in the area:

> Nathalie: *…we are all teachers that did our time there and left in peace and decided to leave. But there are teachers that went up and left not long after because it wasn't for them, and I wonder if they had to go through this same process, if it would be different for them.*
> Kim: *That's a great point.*
> Nathalie: *You know it might have been [more one] dimensional but also difficult, more profoundly difficult.*
> Sara: *Yes and the difficulties are probably not at the same level either…*
> Melissa: *Exactly. I'm wondering those people that had a negative experience would have had even a minimum of inspiration for a project like this… I don't think so…Like if I would have had a bad time, I wouldn't feel like writing a poem about it…I don't think I would have wanted to think about it or elaborate on it, or it would have just been a rehashing of negative and what would be the point of it?*
> Nathalie: *But at the same time, that's how they experienced it, so it's still a Northern experience and it's also going to influence them in the South. You know they experienced it, whether it was positive or not, what they're going to remember is still going to influence them here even if it's not like our experience.*
> Melissa: *Yes, you're right.*
> Nathalie: *Well, anyways, it was just a thought that I had…when I went we were five new teachers…and in those five we were only two that stayed more than a year. So there were still a lot that left, but despite everything, their experience is still there, but perhaps a bit less complete and final than ours…it would have been interesting to hear from someone that didn't [live the full experience].* (disc2p.12-13)

Results: "Second Thoughts"

I struggled to hybridize the results of personal memories, experiences and stories in a scholarly *and* holistic, as well as decolonizing, form. In my various failed attempts at creating concept maps that would accurately depict the inter-related and inter-dependent results of my

findings, my steps along the path began faltering in their efforts to beat in unison with my heart. I was frustrated, angered, and confused by the thoughts in my mind (Western/academic) and the feelings in my heart (Indigenous/holistic) which no longer seemed to be communicating effectively. I was having second thoughts about my entire study. I felt like a lonely pebble once again. Thankfully, I remembered that I knew where to look for help and that it wasn't very far.

As Wilson (2008) states, "one problem is that the elements of an Indigenous research paradigm are interrelated or interdependent; it is difficult to separate one to write about the other" (p. 69). Thus, as discussed previously, not only was I struggling to present the findings in a hybrid form, fusing both the Western and Indigenous views but, I also encountered the problem of finding a way to embed the voices and words of the participants within the presentation of my (our) results. I find myself agreeing and sympathising with Wilson (2008) when he writes,

> I've come to see that there are several different problems that we can run into. The first has to do with our oral traditions and style of discourse and logic, because our non-linear logic leads to a problem when we try to give a linear or written expression of how the ideas were formed. Separated from the rest of their relationships, the ideas may lose their life or become objectified and therefore less real. The mainstream style is to dissect or take ideas apart [from] things to see how they work, and written discourse is a part of this process. Our Indigenous style is to build things up to see how they work. This often requires hands-on or experiential ways of knowing that are difficult to relate in words. So written discourse may or may not help this process. (p.123)

As I began writing the analysis portion of my dissertation, the data began speaking to me again, and I realized that my second thoughts about completing my study, on second thought, were in fact another manifestation of having waited and listened to the 'second thought' (Tanaka, 2016). The ceremony that I and my participants had committed ourselves to, showed me that I had already embedded the words of my participants throughout the presentation of our findings in various ways. Not only had I included quotes and excerpts of conversation as in a story-telling and sharing circle but the titles of the emerging and main categories, and their definitions, had all come from the participants themselves. In the participants' original words, all the information in every table, beginning with the first (red) table from the first day, to the final combined (rainbow) table showing the progression of thought that had been ongoing throughout the study,

and displaying the results of the three days of inquiry, appears in the participant's original wording and shows how they are inter-related and inter-dependent. As Wilson (2008) relates,

> An Indigenous methodology includes all of these relationships, and if you are breaking things down into their smallest pieces, you are destroying all of the relationships around it. So an Indigenous style of analysis has to look at all those relations as a whole instead of breaking it down…You have to use intuitive logic, where you are looking at the whole thing at once and coming up with your answers through analysis that way. (p. 119)

This realization helped dissipate the concerns I was having with validity as in Indigenous research paradigms, "right or wrong; validity; statistically significant; worthy or unworthy; value judgments lose their meaning" (Wilson, p. 77). Instead, "what is more important and meaningful is fulfilling a role and obligations in the research relationship – that is, being accountable to your relations" (Wilson, 2008, p. 77). As Wilson (2008) reminded me,

> the researcher is therefore a part of his or her research and inseparable from the subject of research. The knowledge that the researcher interprets must be respectful and of help to build the relationships that have been established through the process of finding out information. Furthermore, the Indigenous researcher has a vested interest in the integrity of the methodology (respectful) and the usefulness of the results if they are to be of any use in the Indigenous community (reciprocity). (p.77)

The trusting relationships between the participants and myself, the reciprocal nature of the data, our desire to share our poems within Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities alike … when looking back to the very first day of inquiry, and the very first discussion centred around the sharing of photos, I realized that the conversation about representing the data in both a Western and an Indigenous form had already begun to take place through the use of symbols. Wilson (2008) states,

> the use of metaphor and symbolism in both the analysis and presentation allows us to use a concrete, or maybe even not-so-concrete, example that allows the audience an easier way to form a relationship with something that is abstract. The symbolism allows the ceremony to work better. And this symbol can't be separated from the idea or ideal it represents. (p. 124)

To explain, not only had I used symbolism through the *inukshuk* as a running metaphor throughout my study; not only had the participants and I discovered and discussed hidden

symbols in our memory texts and learned from the symbols in our poems, but in discussing our photos, the participants had also helped reveal another symbol that could represent the findings of our study as a whole: the symbol of an igloo. As Nathalie stated when sharing a picture she had taken: *the structure of the igloo, the type of construction, you lean on others, you lean on the cubes. The way of doing it is very important, and I think that the transmission of knowing is really important too* (disc1p.4). While Nathalie was discussing the "structure" and "transmission of knowing" involved in building an igloo, she inadvertently hinted at the symbiotic relationship of the cubes and of the importance of "leaning on others" in a community (disc1p.4). Just as in the symbol that I have borrowed from the *inukshuk* to represent the synergetic relationship of the different participants and individual stones, the cubes in an igloo reflect the different methodologies, experiences, memories, words, findings and presentation of knowledge in this study, as they work together in supporting a synergetic whole (Wilson, 2008).

Thus, because the participants and I had become a learning and sharing community of our own, and because our memories and stories informed and supported each other, and because our findings are inter-related, overlapping, and inter-dependent, and because the existence of one is required for the existence of another, I can find no better form in which to represent the holistic nature of our findings than with Nathalie's idea of the igloo. I am reminded of Wilson (2008), who writes about using the medicine wheel as an approach to understanding Indigenous theoretical paradigms:

> putting ideas in a circle or wheel indicates that they are interrelated and that each blends into the next. It also implies that the ideas flow from one to the next in a cyclical fashion…The entire circle is an Indigenous research paradigm. Its entities are inseparable and blend from one into the next. The whole of the paradigm is greater than the parts. (p. 70)

Furthermore, the igloo, like the *inukshuk* model explained in Chapter Three, adapts the medicine wheel as a tribute to ceremony, in a form that is a particular concept original to the Inuit culture and way of transmitting knowledge. In this way I have found a metaphorical concept map in the form of an igloo, as a result of patiently waiting, marinating in, and respectfully listening to the data. The answer had been there all along from the beginning, and I acknowledge the cosmos and give thanks to the universe for having whispered it into my ear; I am grateful to my participants for having shared from the heart and having opened their hearts up to mine; I offer thanks for

allowing my heart to listen to theirs, and I pray that other hearts will be open to listening and receiving the "gifts" and "gentle offerings" generously bequeathed by spirit in our collective ceremony (Tanaka, p. 76). "That's the spiritual part of it" writes Wilson (2008),

> if you talk about research as ceremony, that's the climax of the ceremony, where it all comes together and all those connections are made. Cause that's what ceremony is about, strengthening those connections. So maybe when a research ceremony comes together, when the ceremony is reaching its climax, is when those ideas all come together, those connections are made. (Wilson, p. 122)

Weaving excerpts of conversation throughout the presentation of results thereby gives the words their required time and space, and also allows the reader to experience the sharing of learning as it was, as a story-telling circle; an exchange of interrelated and overlapping themes in a holistic way (Archibald, 2008; Tanaka, 2016; Wilson, 2008). As Tanaka (2016) writes,

> all participants, including myself, co-created understandings of what it meant to learn and teach at that point in time and in that particular location. Through the voicing of our stories in community we engaged in a process of collective liberation from the existing dominant culture of the university setting. We told stories with each other in different ways – through sharing in the circle, small-group discussions, [and]ceremony…Our stories were vessels that embodied our identities and reminded us of our existence. (p. 140)

Finally, embedding the passages into the presentation of results to mirror the story-telling and sharing circle constructed by the participants in this study, also gives the reader an inside look as well as invites him/her into the conversation as a guest-participant. This allows the reader to contribute their own interpretations to the conversation, and to explore their own understanding(s) of the findings; that is, the meaning(s) that they need to make for themselves and the lesson(s) that they need to learn at that particular moment, as in the indirect style that is characteristic of Indigenous learning and ways of knowing (Battiste & Barman, 1995; Tanaka, 2016; Wilson, 2008). This notion relates, as discussed in the 'Outcomes of Participation' section of this chapter, to how the participants made their own meanings and developed their own learning in this study. It also explains how my voice serves as a directional guide rather than an authority. Instead, I offered guiding comments in an effort to inspire the reader to form his/her own opinion of the findings – in conjunction with rather than through my perspective (and the

views of my participants). Thus, “the question is not whether the poets are silent, but whether our ear is acute enough to hear” (Gadamer, 1992, p. 78).

Pushing the Data

Each step in our journey, beginning with the photographs, continuing with the two drafts of our memory texts, their analysis and deconstruction, the experimenting with words in our columns, and the discussions, all helped light the way for important discoveries to be made and to be expressed. The final outcome of our inquiry process helped us to capture all of these highly abstract modes of thought into poems that exemplified how the different categories work together as one. They are, as we are, inexorably linked to our experiences, testifying to their significance then and their importance now. The evidence of curriculum and of education policy in our poems, for example, while not directly stated, are present in the themes of culture, community and language. Building strong relationships with students and creating curriculum based on their needs, abilities and styles of learning, a topic we discussed often and at length, is implied in the poems through the emphasis we placed on community. Community not only symbolizes acceptance and belonging, but includes the importance of culture and the land, which in turn relates to the categories of language and learning. It is very difficult to illustrate the synergy and symbiotic relationships among these interdependent categories in a form that is not artistic or creative (Bruner 1986; Barone & Eisner 2012; Chambers et al, 2012).

Akin to a painting, the complexities show as nuanced, detailed brushstrokes that add depth and personal quality to each element in the composition. Determining when one brushstroke ends and the other commences, or finding where one colour begins and another ends, is an intricate and delicate task whose usefulness is debateable, as all the elements exist and co-exist because of the others. In the ‘bigger picture,’ the individual colours blend and work together to create other colours, and – like those that sparkle out of a crystal displaying all the gradient shades in between, just as the participants have shown with the words, symbols, allusions and metaphors in their poems. While I have endeavoured to create tables to show the integration of the categories and the progression of our thoughts for clarity purposes, I profoundly struggle with the idea of forcing or pushing the data to be presented in a form that is habitually expected of academic communities in Western research paradigms. In the following chapter I discuss the results of my findings. As Dobson (2010) states, “going forward on the

journey of self-discovery, I am convinced that we will need more than science and technology; we will sorely need the poetics of the heart" (p. 133).

Chapter Seven – Touchstones and Poetry: Results Year Two

"The truth about stories is that that's all we are."
(King, 2003, p. 3)

"If research doesn't change you as a person, then you haven't done it right."
(Wilson, 2008, p.135)

The Story-Sharing Journey

In an effort to promote healthy healing and coping strategies, Hannah Tooktoo, a 24 year old Inuk mother, artist and student, cycled across Canada during the summer of 2019 to raise awareness about Nunavik's suicide epidemic and mental health crisis.[17] In one of her Facebook posts leading up to the first day of her mission, Hannah shared a video performance of a spoken word poem that she wrote entitled "Suicide" (Tooktoo, 2019). She explained how having lost numerous friends and family members to suicide, along with struggling with depression herself, created the need for her to bring awareness to the crisis (Tooktoo, 2019). Her call for improved mental health services in Nunavik is one of the main reasons why she was determined to achieve her goal of biking from Victoria, British Columbia to Montreal, Quebec (Janzen, 2019).

Part of Hannah's trajectory for her 4,395 kilometer journey included spending periods of rest in Indigenous communities, so that together, Hannah and the people she met could discuss the different ways they have been affected by mental illness and share coping strategies (Kurz, 2019). These stories were shared online, as Hannah encouraged everyone to post their comments or send her messages and emails (Miron, 2019).

As she met thousands of people who shared their stories of pain and healing, Hannah stated, "I'm just hoping to hear from you guys. I'm trying to steer this conversation in a way that will be the most helpful" (Miron, 2019, para. 17). As she biked across provinces, Hannah emphasized how important it was for her to "to hear … stories, while also sharing her own" (Kurz, 2019, para. 6)."We need to bring awareness, and bring strength" she stated (Sculland,

[17] From January to October 2018 there were 13 youth suicides in Nunavik (J. Deer, 2019). Hannah herself lost four friends/family members in December 2018, and another cousin in April 2019 (J. Deer 2019; Sculland, 2019). According to *Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami*'s 2018 Inuit statistical profile, Inuit youth suicide rates, which continue to increase, are twenty-five times higher than any other population in Canada (Miron, 2019).

2019, para. 9). Part of the healing she hoped to inspire for herself and for others "comes from conversation and connection" (Miron, 2019, para. 11).

When Hannah wrote her poem, she inadvertently invoked the power of words, as it sparked in her the idea and motivation to actively work towards creating change. Hannah nurtured and inspired the creation of a story-telling community; she encouraged learning through sharing; she spread awareness, hope, and healing. Hannah had been listening with 'three ears', embodying the kind of transformative action that can happen through patient listening (Archibald, 2008). Hannah exemplifies having waiting for the 'second thought' (Tanaka, 2016).

Particip-action: The Third Thought

Just as Hannah travelled her own journey down the path with heart, the participants and I, a story-sharing community of our own, told and listened to each other's stories, and in doing so, learned and grew. Moreover, in reaching towards answering the research question, we too have made significant strides in our healing processes, listening with 'three ears', and patiently waiting for the 'second thought' (Archibald, 2008; Tanaka, 2016).

As our third discussion came to an end, the participants expressed gratitude for the sharing and learning that they experienced during this study:

> Kim: *So unless there's any other last things that anyone wants to say?*
> Nathalie: *Except for a thank you, no.*
> Sara: *No, but thank you, really.*
> Kim: *Why are you thanking me? I thank you!*
> Nathalie: *Without the subject of your research, I wouldn't have experienced this, I wouldn't have gone so deeply into how I live my life.*
> Sara: *No, and we don't have many opportunities to talk about it with people who understand.* (disc3p.79)

Even so, the participants and I still could not ignore the fact that we had not completed our journeys. Despite having made striking realizations about ourselves analysis of symbols and metaphors, words and patterns testifying to the influence from our Northern experiences, which in turn pointed towards significant impacts on our current lives, the "*really big learning*" that we discovered, however, was that we still did not know (disc3p.49). As Sara stated at the end of our third discussion regarding our key concerns and burning questions, "*there's a lot of things that don't have an answer*" (disc3p.72).

Thus, after having waited for the 'second thought,' we decided that we needed to wait once more (Tanaka, 2016). We decided to return to the study one year after our third discussion, allowing time for further individual reflection. By 'marinating' on our poems, on our key concerns and burning issues, and our participation in this study on our own time and at our own pace, we hoped that we would be able to reach closer to finding a more complete answer to the research question. At this point, the question still seemed like an unsolved puzzle; we still needed to fill in some gaps and connect some pieces. I was curious to see what additional insights could be made. Furthermore, the ongoing and active participation from my participants would not only allow for member checking one year later, it also demonstrated how invested the participants had become.

The high level of interest, commitment, and active and ongoing participation from all participants in this study is what I have termed 'particip-action.' Their action surprised and humbled me. Choosing to wait patiently for an additional period of time invoked the seven principles of 'storywork,' and became what I term, inspired by Tanaka (2016), the 'third thought' (Archibald, 2008).[18]

I acknowledge and give my deepest thanks to the universe and the journey for having prepared our hearts and ears in preparation to receive the generous gifts that ceremony and spirit gently offered through the power of words (Archibald, 2008; Tanaka, 2016, Wilson, 2008). In the following sections of this chapter, I present the findings of our 'particip-action' in having waited for the 'third thought'.

Touchstones: Remembering, Revisiting, Reconciliating

We reconvened our story-sharing circle on March 23rd, 2019. The fourth and final discussion, lasting almost two hours, began with a re-reading of our poems, followed by a presentation of the previous year's findings, which lead to a discussion centred on the links to our current teaching practices (including a revisiting of our key issues, major concerns, and burning questions) (rjp.58). I adopt the term 'touchstones' for these recurring points.

According to Strong-Wilson (2006b), "a touchstone is understood as a returning to the same spot, that is, to the same *topos* within a teacher's 'landscapes of learning'" (p. 71). Within

[18] The seven principles of storywork are "respect, responsibility, reciprocity, reverence, holism, interrelatedness, and synergy," as related to using stories and storytelling for educational purposes (Archibald, 2008, p. ix).

the context of this study, I borrow the term touchstone to identify the "familiar markers" (Strong-Wilson, 2006b, p. 71) or "important landmarks" (Strong-Wilson et al, 2014, p. 4) within the participants' and my past Nunavik and current southern Quebec teaching practices. "A touchstone signifies a past place to which the individual is drawn and frequently returns" (Strong-Wilson et al, 2014, p. 4). The familiar markers and important landmarks, the places to which we frequently returned – the touchstones – of this study were its key concerns, major issues and burning questions that developed throughout the initial three days of inquiry and that returned in our fourth discussion a year later (Strong-Wilson, 2006b; Strong-Wilson et al, 2014). These touchstones pointed to the cornerstones of our inquiry, which emerged, developed and were built upon through memory work, self-study, and narrative/poetic inquiry, all within the framework of Indigenous and decolonizing methodologies.

As Strong-Wilson (2006b) explains of literary touchstones, "formative passages come to comprise literary memory, which also becomes cultural memory because certain stories are considered to be more significant (i.e. more formative) than others" (p. 71). In essence, the touchstones highlight our learning as they anchor our progress. To explain, in revisiting these touchstones, we re-evaluated them to confirm our previous year's findings, but we also built upon them with the new insights and experiences from our additional year of individual reflection on our current teaching practices. As Strong-Wilson et al (2014) note,

> we need to pay closer attention to the [touchstones that teachers] bring and the discourse they use in navigating between 'old' touchstones and 'new' ones, as these attachments mark the openings for critical inquiry that will otherwise close and rest as unconscious intertextual associations informing teaching. (p.13)

Thus, in examining the previous year's 'old' touchstones, and elaborating on them, we created 'new' touchstones or new versions or interpretations of the old touchstones, which is a critical step in informing a teacher's professional development and self-improvement. Furthermore, since they are places from our past that we return to in our present, the touchstones signal the importance of nostalgia for self-improvement, since nostalgia helped bring them to the light, through the methods of self-study, memory work and narrative/poetic inquiry (Strong-Wilson et al, 2014).

Link to current teaching practice

I will begin by presenting how the poems, and specific words in our previous year's poems (indicated in square brackets), speak to how our past Nunavik teaching experiences remain present in our current southern Quebec teaching practices:

> Nathalie: *I think that it still reflects how I feel one year later in the sense that it's like two years mixed in my head with many things, positive, negative, and my poem is the same thing. It's like a big portrait of my two years there. One year later it still feels as strong.*
> Melissa: *…I find that, I would say it the same way again today. It's very representative and when I talk about it, it's like that too. I wouldn't change anything…it's still like this that I would tell the story.*
> Kim: *Are there still words in your poem that are present in your teaching today?*
> Melissa: *Oh yes! For example if I look at [surviving the threat] you know sometimes it could mean the parents, it could come from administration or colleagues sometimes… Change. Change always is a bit scary.*
> Kim: *Yes.*
> Melissa: *Imagining the worst…Those would be the three parts that are still present in my poem.*
> Sara: *…there are still things that I can really apply like "understanding the silence." It's not the same silence of the North, but there are a lot of [my students] who don't have the ability to speak, so trying to understand certain silences. [Opening my eyes, looking to see] is the same thing too because you have to observe them a lot to be able to communicate with them. [Feeling] is the same thing. [Waiting] because sometimes when they want to produce a response with their communication apparatus it could take really long. [The smile that touches] also because there are many who it's their only way of communicating… so it's making me realize that they're really two completely different and completely opposite universes, but there are a lot of things that apply really well.*
> Kim: *And Nathalie do you see words?*
> Nathalie: *Yeah…[Questioning myself, doubting myself]… it's exactly the same…It's a short intrusion that I'm making because I'm only spending four months with them… [worry, impatience] I was worried about returning to work, but I was also impatient at the same time…and [her new foster family]. The Inuit were like my foster family but now it's my students, it's my new family for the next few months, so,*
> Kim: *I love that you used the word family for your students.*
> Nathalie: *Yeah, and when I've been telling them that since I came back that we're like a family…they don't have the sense of belonging to a group and it's very difficult…so I'm going to try to create that feeling of family with these kids in the following months…. [seeming strong] oh my lord, they all speak to me these words!*
> Kim: *It's crazy no, how, yes it's something so different but there are so many links still. So what are the influences that you really notice of the North when you teach now? Like you just said the family,*
> Nathalie: *The family, yes. And I'm going to go with going day by day…we always said one day at a time, and we'll take it as it comes, and that's really what I'm doing right now in my class…*

Kim: *Yeah that makes sense. Sara, in your teaching, do you still find some influence from the North when you teach?*
Sara: *Well, adaptations all the time, that's for sure that it's always there … to really start with the students and see who you have in front of you…*
Kim: *And for myself too I find that for me it's really the relationship with the students. I really always still try to have fun with them.* (disc4p.7-10)

As the discussion progressed, the participants and I discussed how certain skills and methods that were influences from the past remain present. In discussing change and "going day by day" for instance, Melissa, Sara and Nathalie highlighted how flexibility is a vital technique learned in Nunavik that continues to contribute to our teacher identities in southern Quebec (disc4p.9). Sara further added how creativity allows her to design adaptations for her students beginning with their needs, which is especially noteworthy, as her teaching task was different this year. She learned how to navigate teaching and designing lessons differently and more creatively, a goal she mentioned at the end of the previous year's third discussion. Nathalie and I both discussed how our relationships with students and creating a family and community environment in our classes are integral characteristics of our teaching styles. To this, Sara added how having fun in this family/community classroom setting is crucial for students' learning and well-being (disc4p.10). There were also further insights regarding adaptations and our observational skills:

Melissa: *I agree with everything everyone said, and I would add the adaptation, like the stupid photocopier is jammed, you need something and you can't have it, so you either have to have something ready or you have to think fast.*
Kim: *Yes, exactly.*
Melissa: *I developed that a lot and it follows me still today it helps me a lot today, I think it's the only thing that's a bit different, but if not, I agree with all the ideas.*
Kim: *Yes and by saying that you also made me think of my excellent observational skills, like I observe so well what is happening in the class that even the students are like 'my god miss you're like a hawk, you hear everything!' [all laughing]*
Melissa: *It's true!*
Kim: *It's funny because they're like amazed at my talent that I hear everything and I see everything! So I'm certain that comes from the North too, you know?*
Sara: *Yes, certainly*. (disc4p.11)

The category of mental health that Nathalie hinted at earlier in the conversation when discussing taking things "day by day" was revisited in more depth (disc4p.11):

Kim: *And you spoke too, Nathalie about how the North taught you about self-care. About taking a day for your mental health.*
Nathalie: *Yes. Not burning out before,*

Kim: *Yeah, that of course you need to teach, but you can't teach if you're not feeling well, so you said that you really learned that and you still use that today.*
Nathalie: *Definitely and I think I'm trying to transmit that to my colleagues too. Last Friday one of my colleagues showed up to school with no more voice… and I said to her but what are you doing here?*
Kim: *Yeah. I think there's a guilt.*
Nathalie: *Yes that's exactly what she said… but if you want to be in shape you need to stay home, the kids will be ok. We have to really take care of ourselves first.* (disc4p.17-18)

Finally, we re-examined the touchstones within our poems, evaluating influences on practice them through a lens of having participated in this study:

Kim: *Since we have spoken a year ago, do you find that you notice more these influences…Have you maybe thought about it more, how the North is affecting your teaching? Did the conversations that we had, make you realize a bit more the influences of the North – more than not having had the discussions before?*
Melissa: *…it still remains today as my biggest professional experience, sometimes going into interviews I had to explain things, and of course since we talked about it together, well yes, it did put things more on my mind…*
Nathalie: *Me too… I think about it daily, but I don't think I say "oh this comes from the North" necessarily, but after I say "oh yes it's true, I'm perhaps like this because that experience is inside me."*
Sara: *I think it's engrained, it's a part of me but I think it's really a part of the teacher I am in general, so yes sometimes in interventions I wonder what I could do, and I think it's a part of my baggage, a part of all of my teaching baggage, so I don't have any memories this year of thinking 'oh, I did that in the North' or 'this comes from the North' … I think it's too embedded now.*
Kim: *I really noticed it but I think it's because I'm reading these things often … I do think about it a lot and more often. And I was going to ask how did participating in the project affect your teaching? Because for example Nathalie, you said that you had been inspired by our discussions, to call your class your family?*
Nathalie: *Yes.*
Kim: *And I was going to ask you if you still do, and you do, so that's a really cool thing because you got it from here and you're still using it, so I was going to ask Sara, because Sara had said "I'll let you know one year later," do you think that maybe there was something from our discussions, from this project, that influenced your teaching?*
Sara: *Well maybe because I changed task and at the beginning I had to readjust, to readapt, to reconstruct, and…creativity, adaptation, the feeling of family, of cohesion. It's very important for me that, for example if we're using puppets, well there are some who can't move their hands, so being able to help others, listening to others, to not judge, and a type of feeling that everyone has their place, that even if you're different it's ok, we're going to help you and everyone's got your back, so… finally I think yes, there was an influence.* (disc4p.12-13)

Reverse culture shock

The participants and I had discussed struggling to readapt to the constant rush of city life, and how reverse culture shock was a significant aspect of our post-Nunavik identities. We returned to this touchstone in the fourth discussion, confirming that reverse culture shock remains actively present in our daily lives:

> Kim: *I also still struggle sometimes to adapt to the traffic, the people, too many people, in stores it still stresses me, so I don't know if you find that too?*
> Sara: *Well I find that, we try very hard at home to have the slowest life style possible. We are very lucky because we can do everything by bicycle, work is not far from home. My schedule with my new task is, you know, I start a lot later in the morning … so all that kind of crazy life of spending time in the car, of running everywhere, we really try to not do that, and that is really good for me. For sure it's not the same as when we were in the North, for sure it's a thousand times faster, but it allows me to not have that anguish of too many people, too much this, too much that, I never go to malls anymore, I'm not able to anymore…* (disc4p.13-14)

This new dimension of reverse culture shock intimated deep ties to feelings of lack of family and community. Nathalie elaborated by describing how the lack of family/community negatively affected her relationship with her students within her classroom environment:

> *I've been telling them that since I came back that we're like a little family. They're like 'no, we're not a family,' and they [talk back] and they don't have the sense of belonging to a group and it's very difficult in my group right now with regards to that because they're very, very individualistic, and it's very hard. So I'm going to try to create that feeling of family with these kids in the following months to try to lighten the ambiance that is in the class*. (disc4p.9)

Nathalie strongly believed in the notion of creating community within her classroom through the adoption and implementation of a family environment (Nathalie, personal communication, July 22, 2019). This reminded me of an experience with a particularly challenging group of Grade 9 students I had taught the previous year. Despite my various efforts to find ways to strengthen our bonds and create a pleasant learning environment, the students in the class did not care for my efforts in incorporating their interests or ideas in my lesson plans, projects, or learning and evaluation situations. In fact, they ridiculed me, challenging my authority and knowledge. After the first months of teaching this group, I decided to attempt using the family strategy. I had not incorporated it from the beginning, as I always take some time to 'feel out' the students and the overall energy of the group before introducing the concept – in most cases, introducing the notion of family is one that I use to strengthen our relationship rather

than try to create one. I had reached out to the principal and former teachers who had taught the students in the past, however I was met with a lack of support. It turns out that most of these students had severe academic and behavioural weaknesses and had previously been in a specialised class, but due to budget cuts had been merged into the mainstream that year. Sadly, their previous teachers had labelled them as beyond hope. Although I was well aware that these 15-, 16- and 17-year-old teenagers might laugh at me even further, I went with my heart and prayed that it would help, all the while bracing myself for the mockery that I was opening myself up to.

Remarkably, the family strategy worked. While at first, the students were confused and shocked, they also began to smile, and this time not at me, but with me. Gradually the students shed their harsh outer layers and let me and their classmates in. As the year progressed and bonds grew, we made inside jokes, created nicknames for each other, held family meetings during times of struggle, and celebrated with 'family time' – pleasant activities to acknowledge and reward their efforts and accomplishments. Eventually, one of the most notoriously troublesome students even began to call me "mom." He would run up to me and greet me in hallways or the cafeteria, and the looks of baffled teachers hinted that I had somehow succeeded in reaching this student who had been previously labelled as a lost case. Teachers soon began to take notice of his progress, and wondered what I had done to provoke such an improvement. I shared with them how I used the family method, and they commended me for inspiring such change. During recesses and lunch periods, the brothers and sisters of our family also introduced me to their friends, who asked to be 'adopted' into the family. The experience helped me realize that, no matter what age or what assumed behaviours or attitudes students have, whatever past and sometimes negative experiences they may bring with them, the fact remains, that all they truly wanted was to feel loved and accepted, and most importantly, that they belong.

Liminality

Reverse culture shock and the notion of belonging to a family and community are deeply associated with feelings of liminality and our search for home. The following excerpt of a conversation from our fourth discussion revisits and re-evaluates the touchstone of liminality:

> Melissa: *…I'm still not in my ideal place and I still have to drive a lot to go to work, but I'm looking for a type of calm, you know me going to teach in Montreal, forget about that. I'm looking for something else, the environment. For me teaching in a rural area is*

important, so I think that's a big trait that remained. It wasn't there before going North but now that I experienced it…when I finally decide to stay somewhere permanently it will be…an environment that's really open and calm and natural…
Sara: *Yes, I'm realizing that I miss the horizon. That I find more and more difficult…we we try to go up [to the Laurentians] as much as we can, or go in the woods as often as we can…The view of the bay, the view of the water, that I will continue to miss.*
Kim: *…You both said, Sara and Nathalie, that if it weren't for the North, you probably would not teach anymore: [reading from discussion 3]"in big high schools it was too much. I was asking myself if I still wanted to teach for a living during that time because it was just so much and I was like no, and I found that contrary to the North it seemed like my impact was so insignificant here."*
Sara: *Yeah, I remember…the comparison was really big between the two milieus when I came back…yes the North made me realize that big high schools it's for sure that it's a no for me. Something that wouldn't be in special education I think it would be no too. I think that it goes too fast, but [in my school] we can adapt how we want…So it's a lot slower, and it makes me realize that I never made the connection between the speed of the North and my need to live at a slower pace, but it definitely has an impact.*
Kim: *For sure.*
Sara: *I'm just realizing that there's surely an impact. But that's it's part of many choices that we make, not just in teaching, but currently in our lives at home, we make a lot of choices to slow down in general, and it's clear that it must be a direct impact from the North…I will leave as early as I can with [my daughter] in the morning just to walk longer, and to be outside longer, and things like that…I have probably made life choices in these past few years since I've been back to get as close as possible to that feeling of tranquility that there was in the North. You know sometimes I can go home to eat during lunch hour like we used to do all the time in the North.*
Kim: *Yeah that's so cool.*
Nathalie: *I miss that so much.*
Melissa: *That's one thing I wish I could do!* (disc4p.14-16)

In the above excerpt, we revisited how liminality affects us daily, with regards to our nostalgia for the Northern landscape, but also in our attempts at living a slower life style more in tune with nature. These aspects signal a continued search for home, as Melissa expressed through her perpetual search for a permanent area to dwell, or as Sara explained about her continual search for tranquility. Both Melissa and Sara agreed that they make life decisions based on their search for home, such as excluding large urban schools from their teaching preferences, and taking active steps towards recreating their Northern lifestyles in Southern Quebec. The re-evaluation of this touchstone with new knowledge indicates that these life choices reflect an influence from our past Nunavik experiences and also reinforce the notion of wanting to recreate the North in the South, discussed in the previous chapter. The following excerpt of conversation

suggests how the touchstone of liminality also presents itself in our frustrations with the education system and its policies.

Education policy

Sara was reminded how if it were not for the Nunavik teaching experience, she probably would no longer be a teacher. Sara clarified her statement by discussing that the impacts we have on students are less obvious in southern Quebec. Nathalie had concurred how she would probably no longer teach if it were not for her Northern experience. The following excerpt of conversation shows how she negotiates that statement within her current teaching practice:

> Kim: *Nathalie what do you about what you said that last year? If it weren't for teaching in the North you probably wouldn't teach?*
> Nathalie: *Well it's only been two weeks that I'm back but I again had the thought that maybe teaching is not what I want to do all my life. So, I had my experience in the North, now I teach [in an inner city elementary school in Montreal]. I don't know if I would have started here with the conditions I have at this moment and that I've had the last 3 years… It's really not going well. I have no support in my class, there's no resource teacher, not in math, not in French, there are many who need the resource support and there isn't any. There's no support in the North. There was a bit more of an accompaniment but there was also a letting go that allowed you to let go too.*
> Sara: *There wasn't the same pressure.*
> Nathalie: *Yes but here it's the 10 communications with parents, I find that here I'm always [trying to catch up], I'm never 100% caught up, I'm always thinking 'oh I have to do this, oh I have to do that.' I always forget something. I don't know if I can always do this.* (disc4p.17)

Nathalie questioned her capability to continue teaching due to the numerous pressures and demands she feels come from the education system and its policies. Her questioning is connected to reverse culture shock and liminality, for despite not having more support in Nunavik, we were at least able to be more flexible as there were less demands and pressure (as she explained). Sara pointed out that these frustrations may also be emphasized by the fact that she is a new mother. Sara explained that new mothers encounter such difficulties in their attempts to achieve a work-life balance when they return to work, and she soothed Nathalie's doubts by informing her that she was able to recuperate her rhythm after a few months of having returned from her own maternity leave. This left Nathalie hopeful that she will be able to continue in the profession for many years to come (Nathalie, personal communication, July 22, 2019).

Earlier in our discussion, Sara mentioned how the system "*takes away their want to learn*" when we explored the importance of relationships with students and the need to have fun in our classrooms (see *Link to current practice*, this chapter) (disc4p.10). This notion was revisited once again when discussing curriculum (in both the North and South), another touchstone within the cornerstone of education policy:

> *So that's what I really think connects the two [past northern and present southern] experiences the most, I think I will never again teach with a curriculum in my head at the start; I will always look at who the individuals are in front of me and what I can do. Because on top of it a group is never homogenous, they don't all learn the same way, they don't all have the same experiences, they didn't all have the same morning, so I think that maybe it makes me more human in my teaching rather than just aiming for the learning. And the task that I have this year allows me to do that more because [in] dramatic arts in elementary school, they're in my class and they develop a lot of things without noticing it.* (disc4p.10)

In the above excerpt, Sara explained that she places understanding her students and their needs first, and how that is more important and should come before strictly following a curriculum.

Social justice awareness, support and education

In this section, I discuss how reconciling our roles in education relates to social justice and our personal efforts and larger goals of contributing to the restoration of positive relations between non-Indigenous and Indigenous peoples living in Canada. Looking back to our third discussion and the touchstone of social justice, I recall that the participants and I emphasized how we take active steps in our families and social circles to spread messages of awareness and how we align ourselves as Indigenous supporters. I also recall how we attempt to incorporate Indigenous perspectives in our pedagogy and how we advocate for collaboration in the design and implementation of curricula, as well as in the notion of "bringing school home" (to the North) with regards to teacher training, vocational education, higher learning, and in the location of the head office of the Nunavik school board (disc3p.63-67). The following excerpt exemplifies how reciprocal touchstones of education policy and social justice were revisited and re-evaluated to include new knowledge. When asked what she learned by participating in this study, Sara responded:

> *it makes me realize … The North will always… be a part of me, and it makes me realize that education in general, how it's built and everything, it bothers me, and I will always be ultra aware of the Indigenous cause at large, not just the Inuit, you know all the stuff*

> *about missing Native women, or killed, that really bothers me. I read more books written by Native authors in the last year than I have in my whole life, so I think it's important for me…to be an ally, but to not take the spotlight, to not be the white girl who wants to [speak for/about them.]* (disc4p.26)

Our liminality presents itself in every aspect of our professional and personal lives, influencing our decisions and choices. If I take my example of attempting to recreate the family and community bonds in my classroom, liminality exists not only in my recreations, but also in the fact that I am always assigned to a new school every year. Changing schools adds to my struggles in finding community and belonging. It increases the difficulties in making lasting relationships with colleagues and does not allow me to keep developing the relationships that I build with students. It makes me extremely sad that I have made some meaningful bonds but that I am never given the opportunity to see the students again and to continue helping them achieve their goals. To quote Melissa, as I always have to "start from zero", students often test and challenge me because they assume that I am a new teacher as I am new to their school (rjp.41). These added difficulties specific to my current teaching practice all relate to my liminality, and I have used the family method as a source of continuity just as Melissa's continual search for home and Sara's constant need to slow down and find tranquility in attempt to reconcile our past experiences in our present personal and professional lives. In the following section I present secondary effects that developed within the context of reconciliation as a result of having participated in this study.

Outcomes of Participation

Writing skills

As an unexpected outcome of participation, Melissa and Nathalie expressed developing confidence and pride in their writing due to the creation of their memory texts and poems, despite having had initial fears because of what they believed were inadequate writing skills. I recall Melissa revealing that participating in this study helped her "develop a writer's side" that she did not know existed, while Nathalie expressed the desire to want to continue writing (disc3p.60). Sara revealed struggling with the method of the word columns, but she was grateful for the opportunity to try something new. I was curious to see if there had been any developments or progress in the participants' writing during the additional year of reflection:

Kim: *Nathalie, Melissa, you said that maybe you would continue writing. Nathalie you said you were keeping your poem because you were very proud of it.*
Nathalie: *Yes but when I read it this morning it didn't speak to me as much as it did…But the other two texts that I reread this morning, they really speak to me more than the poem does.*
Kim: *So it didn't inspire you to keep writing?*
Nathalie: *No but I think it's just the way I am because I wanted to write things to [my daughter] and I didn't end up writing anything either.*
Kim: *No, and you Melissa?*
Melissa: *Well yes, since I had a bit of a mental health follow-up, it's something that helps me a lot…if there's something that's not going well, or instead of keeping things in, or letting them out on someone else, I'll write about it instead.*
Kim: *That's awesome.*
Melissa: *...when I read it I realize I got through it, so it's a way of encouraging myself.*
Sara: *It's like read it and you're like 'oh I was there and I'm not anymore so it's…*
Melissa: *That's it, so it could seem weird to want to reread about those parts, but you see that you got through it, you evolved, you did other things, so I find it helps.*
Sara: *…I wrote poetry…it's funny… I wrote more poetry in this last year than in my whole life.* (disc4p.21-22)

Although initially disappointed when Nathalie revealed that she did not continue to write, I realized that all of the other participants, including myself, definitely had. While I continued writing related to my research, I also wrote poetry and ideas for fictional stories that I would like to pursue in the future. The therapeutic aspect of writing helped Melissa in her healing process as she reconciled difficult feelings/experiences from the past, learning and growing from them in the present and towards the future. Sara remarkably revealed that she kept writing poetry and in fact was inspired to write the most poetry "in this last year than in [her] whole life" (disc4p.22). Sara also revealed in the 'social justice' section above, how she had also read "more books by Native authors in the last year than [she had] in [her] whole life" indicating that along with writing poetry, she was also inspired to choose reading material to further her knowledge, as she claimed that participating in this study provoked her desire to continue her contribution to social justice and to the *"Indigenous cause at large"* (disc4p.26).

Professional development

The following excerpt of conversation from our third discussion highlights how we attempted to reconcile our burning issues and key concerns:

Nathalie: *I can't say what more I'll do exactly, except for like, learning and evaluation situations that are more catered to the children, but to know that it [the North] will*

> *always live in me…To remember that, because it's how I grew in my teaching, it's a part of my evolution as a teacher, so I can't leave it on the side…*
> Melissa: *For me, it's the same as you. I don't know really what can be done other than keeping this and pursue our questions and ideas, and try to improve our practice as best as we can with regards to this.*
> Sara: *I'm going to go in the same direction. There's one thing I'm afraid of and that's of becoming a blasé teacher…I'm not there yet because I'm still super passionate about what I do, but I think all this will make it so I'm not being jaded…questioning myself, questioning the education system, questioning the way I teach, focusing on my students. I think that the day where I no longer have all that inside me, those questions and those points for improvement, that's when I'll have to stop because it won't be beneficial to anyone to teach, not to me, nor to the children.* (disc3p.63)

In our third discussion, the participants and I expressed how having these deep concerns were crucial for our professional development, expressing the desire to keep questioning education and our places in it, indicating our passion and desire to keep learning. In our fourth discussion one year later, the participants again revealed how participating was instrumental in revealing how deeply rooted Nunavik continues to be in our lives, both personally and professionally:

> Nathalie: *I'd like to try to say ok we got closure, we finished that part but it will always stay.*
> Kim: *Ok so it will always be a part of your identity.*
> Nathalie: *Yes. It's integrated. Inseparable.* (disc4p.15)

In fact, the touchstone of liminality can also be linked to our professional development, contributing to the parts of our identities that we feel exist because of our Northern experiences:

> Nathalie: *I'm perhaps like this because that experience is inside me.*
> Sara: *I think it's engrained, it's a part of me but I think it's really a part of the teacher I am in general…I think it's a part of my baggage…so I don't have any memories this year of thinking 'oh, I did that in the North or this comes from the North' or, no, I think it's too embedded now.* (disc4p.12)

The quality of liminality is so engrained in our identities that it is difficult to pinpoint one year later exactly what aspects of our teaching are influenced by the North. This marks a significant difference from our previous year's discussions, where we were more easily able to identify certain teaching characteristics that were learned in the North; moreover, Melissa responded: "*I don't think there was a big influence. What changed had already changed before"* (disc4p.12). However, we appear to have ended where we began: The North is such an integral part of our whole beings, that it will always be an identifying characteristic of our personalities and the way

we live our lives. Sara had stated of one of her photographs, *"this picture is a bit discomforting because it's eight years that I've been back but I still feel like [it is] home"* (disc1p.2) and later added: *"It's like I'm the one who doesn't fit in again. In the North I wasn't Inuit, here I'm not…"* (disc1p.19). Similarly, I wrote in the first draft of my memory text: *"She was worried about being alone back "home." She worried she would no longer fit in"* (disc1p.11). Nathalie remarked: *"…it's important that feeling of being united and I don't find it here"* (disc1p.16), and further *"There's something there that I miss…that makes me want that feeling from the North…but it's never like there"* (disc1p.16). And Melissa stated *"I always introduce myself by stating that I began my career like that"* (disc1p.27).

We struggle to fit in and find belonging in our original southern Quebec homes because Nunavik has become a part of us even though we are apart from it. This heavily felt liminality exists in large part due to nostalgia and our response to it.

Reconciling Restorative and Reflective Nostalgia

"Touchstones are a form of nostalgia" (Strong-Wilson et al, 2014, p. 5). According to Boym (2001), "there are two kinds of nostalgia that characterize one's relationship to the past, to the imagined community, to home, to one's own self-perception: restorative and reflective" (p. 41). These types of nostalgia are about

> the ways in which we make sense of our seemingly ineffable homesickness and how we view our relationship to a collective home … not solely the inner space of an individual psyche but the interrelationship between individual and collective remembrance. (Boym, 2001, p. 49)

Whereas "restorative nostalgia puts emphasis on *nostos*," which translated from Latin means home, "and proposes to rebuild the lost home and patch up the memory gaps," reflective nostalgia "dwells in *algia*, in longing and loss, the imperfect process of remembrance" (Boym, 2001, p. 41). Boym (2001) goes on to clarify that "restorative nostalgia manifests itself in total reconstructions of monuments of the past, while reflective nostalgia lingers on ruins, the patina of time and history, in the dreams of another place and another time" (p. 41). My participants and I began our collective self-study through memory work. In the discussion of our photographs, memory texts and poems, we revisited certain touchstones or landmarks of our collective memory in our attempts to find influences and impacts from our past Nunavik teaching

experiences in our current southern Quebec practices (Boym, 2001; Strong-Wilson et al, 2014). Through individual and collective reflection, we remembered, revisited and re-evaluated key concerns and burning issues and were able to track our learning and development, realizing in the fourth and final discussion that while we had made significant new discoveries, ultimately, we had come full circle, ending in the liminality that we began. How did this happen? Boym (2001) believes that "to understand restorative nostalgia it is important to distinguish between the habits of the past and the habits of the restoration of the past" (p. 42). While we did make new understandings of our past experiences, we also realized that we continually try to recreate aspects of our past Northern lifestyles in our current southern Quebec lives. Our needs to recreate family, for example, whether in our classrooms (as Nathalie and myself have done) or through Friday night potlucks (as Nathalie and Melissa have done), stems from what Boym (2001), quoting Hobswam (1993), calls restorative nostalgia:

> restored or invented tradition refers to a 'set of practices normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual of symbolic nature which seeks to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition which automatically implies continuity with the past.' (p. 42)

My use of the family method to restore some continuity in my practice that involves constant change, is therefore an "invented tradition," as it "builds on the sense of loss of community and cohesion and offers a comforting collective script for individual longing" (p. 42). Thus,

> what drives restorative nostalgia is not the sentiment of distance and longing but rather anxiety about those who draw attention to historical incongruities between past and present and thus question the wholeness and continuity of the restored tradition. (Boym, 2001, p. 42-43).

In this way, the participants and my need to recreate certain aspects of our Northern lifestyle is not only connected to our identities as liminal beings, but stems from our (restorative) nostalgia, as " nostalgia inevitably reappears as a defense mechanism in a time of accelerated rhythms of life and historical upheavals" (Boym, 2001, p. xiv ch.9). Thus, our recreations are not only a longing for place, but for a different time, as evidenced in Sara's search for a slower-paced, tranquil lifestyle (Boym, 2001). In other words, this acting out of our nostalgia is performed in the "repetition of the unrepeatable, materialization of the immaterial" (Boym, 2001, p. xcii). While restorative nostalgia tries to recreate or restore the home, reflective nostalgia

> dwells on the ambivalences of human longing and belonging and does not shy away from the contradictions of modernity. Restorative nostalgia does not think of itself as nostalgia, but rather as truth and tradition. Restorative nostalgia protects the absolute truth, while reflective nostalgia calls it into doubt. (Boym, 2001, p. xviii)

As nostalgic subjects, our inquiry began with restorative nostalgia and the different ways we are influenced by or try to recreate our Northern lifestyles in the present, however, the fourth discussion showed a marked change and distance from that kind of narrow focus which is concerned with restoring, repeating and recreating. In reflecting and self-critiquing, we called many issues, feelings and thoughts into doubt, evidence of having moved into reflective nostalgia. As Strong-Wilson et al (2014) point out, "reflective nostalgia leads to teacher self-awareness" (p.5) Due to our particip-action and additional year of teaching and reflection, the participants and I seemed more detached and less emotional; there was a distinct distance that had occurred, and while I was disappointed by this distance at first, the detachment suggests that we had shed our fixation with restorative nostalgia for a more constructive or productive type of nostalgia, one that stemmed from self-critique and re-evaluating our touchstones as a result of our ongoing reflection. Even though we are liminals, we are no longer trapped in or by it; instead, we have realized that it has become a part of us. This realization marks a significant step forward that allows us to live our lives as liminals in the present and into the future, rather than feeling stuck in the past because of it.

This transformation from restorative to reflective nostalgia is one that allows nostalgics like myself and my participants some room to breathe and space to move, which is of considerable importance towards our healing processes (Boym, 2001, p. xviii). As Boym (2001) suggests, "re-flection suggests new flexibility, not the reestablishment of the stasis" (p. 49).While there is no "magic cure for nostalgia," Boym's (2001) typology offers a way to understand, navigate, negotiate and reconcile "some of nostalgia's mechanisms of seduction and manipulation," in ways that may help illuminate our nostalgia and how we act, think and feel because of it (p. xviii).

Nostalgic time "is that time-out-of-time of daydreaming and longing that jeopardizes one's timetable and work ethic, even when one is working on nostalgia" (Boym, 2001, p. xix), which could not be more true of my own encounters, as my heavy use of symbolic language indicated when I got lost in reliving the memory of my first and second memory texts (Boym,

2001, p. xix). By delving deeper into the self and confronting my fears and anxieties with support, I was able to let go and make peace with the memory. While the two types of nostalgia (restorative and reflective) "might overlap in their frames of reference … they do not coincide in their narratives and plots of identity" (Boym, 2001, p. 49). That is to say, the two types of nostalgia "use the same triggers of memory and symbols … but tell different stories about it" (Boym, 2001, p. 49). Thus, while the participants and I used similar triggers of memory with the use of photographic prompts from our Northern experiences, and while we analysed the recurring symbols within our memory texts and used them in our poems, the stories based on our collective memories were nonetheless individual to our own personal experiences. In my case, the same triggers and symbols also told different stories at different points in time. As I discussed in the first analysis of my second memory text (see Chapter Five), my heavy use of flowery language indicated that my nostalgia kept me trapped inside a metaphorical snow globe (a symbol that my participants helped me discover). After a period of deep reflection and further analysis, however, I discovered a break in the snow globe so that I am no longer living vicariously inside it (see Chapter Six). Furthermore, the recurring symbols, touchstones, or landmarks of our collective memory were re-evaluated in our fourth discussion to include new knowledge of how we interpret and experience them in our current practices, this due to the self-critique and reflection that took place throughout the additional year of particip-action in this study. In the various ways discussed above; (living rather than struggling with liminality, understanding our recreations, and learning by self-critiquing and re-evaluating touchstones), the participants and I moved from restorative to reflective nostalgia, allowing flexibility to penetrate our nostalgia and create distance. This allowed us to reconcile, reconciliate, learn, grow, and ultimately improve our practices, which is the ultimate goal of self-study (Boym, 2001; Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009; Strong-Wilson et al, 2014).

Reconcili-action and Recommendations

In our fourth discussion, along with contributing to our professional development and different dimensions of reconciliation between the past and the present, the participants and I also suggested two recommendations that may be considered acts of reconciliation. "There's all this talk of reconciliation and I'm all about that 'reconcili-action'" said Hannah Tooktoo, as she stopped for a press interview while on her cycling journey to spread awareness across Canada.

"Let's get past all those pretty words and actually put some work into it" (Kurz, 2019, para. 6). According to Tanaka (2016), "the opportunity to manifest resistance to Eurocentric ways of knowing [can occur] on many levels from the personal to the institutional" (p. 24). Resistance can take many forms, and what occurred in our story-sharing collaborative inquiry was a type of opposition that Tanaka (2016) terms "a *tender resistance*, a decolonizing act of social justice that is simultaneously caring, vulnerable, mindful, and dialogic. It is steeped in the act of a careful, open-minded, and generous listening" (p. 24; emphasis in the original). The two recommendations that the participants and I suggest appeared in the fourth discussion as a result of having performed ceremony; that is, of having listened carefully and patiently waited in our journeys down the path with heart (Archibald, 2008; Battiste & Barman, 1995; Tanaka, 2016; Wilson, 2008).

The first recommendation is concerned with the touchstone of the education system and its policies. What the participants and I came to understand, in our fourth discussion, that while we may feel powerless to effect any change in "the big machine" that is the education system, we can still continue to "do our best" within the current state of affairs (disc4p.25). The participants and I feel that although we may not be in a position to elicit change and improvement at the Ministry level in areas such as the prescribed curriculum, student well-being and beginning with their needs first, we realized that we do have the power to effect change in our own classrooms, and perhaps inspire our colleagues to do the same in theirs. As Sara stated:

> *The impact we can have is us, individually in our classes, and try to have a positive influence on certain colleagues, but at the same time it's hard because teachers that have been there for a long time, and they've always taught the same way, even if you see it's not working … they're like 'well I always did this and it always worked.' No, stop saying that it worked, look at the impact, [it] isn't working! … We have to be a positive influential factor in our milieus but at the same time we have to be careful to not burn out too. A bit like you [Kim] you decided that in your class you were going to have fun, and it was going to be loud, but your students are still learning, so maybe you'll spark a little [change]…* (disc4p. 24)

The participants and I agreed that one way we can reconcile feeling so small in such a "big machine" is by being *a positive influential factor in our milieus* (disc4p.24-25). This can be easier said than done. As Sara pointed out, some teachers are reluctant to change and continue to teach using the same methods and material as they did thirty and forty years ago. While we may encounter administrative roadblocks along the way (for example by being declined the ordering

of new books and materials or the disapproval of field trips), we can still attempt to teach to the best of our abilities with the needs, interests, and well-being of our students at the forefront of our minds, by incorporating creative and innovative techniques, all while including Indigenous perspectives into prescribed curricula. We are aware that change, especially at such a large scale, takes a long time and can only begin with small steps, and as such, we are committed to pursuing the small changes that we can make in our own practices to attempt to create positive learning environments for our students, but also for ourselves, with the hope that there may be a possibility to influence or inspire other teachers along the way.

According to Pinar, bringing about change through the individual first "is part of 'becoming' within curriculum theory" (in S. Deer, 2020, p.12). Pinar's (2015) discussion of "becoming" is tied to the journey of becoming more aligned with the self; that is, to "become in fact what we have not been, or what we are only some of the time and to some extent" (p. 119). Thus, in "becoming" more knowledgeable about the self through our collective journey, we have been able realize that we can effect change, if only in our classrooms. And yet, when I stop to think about it, the thousands of students we teach throughout our careers, is quite a substantial amount of possibility for change. As S. Deer (2019) writes:

> While bringing about change that will influence more than one person is high on the Richter scale, as Pinar (2015) states, "we realize how powerless we are to influence the world condition on this level" (p. 121). What he believes is more penetrable are the levels and spheres in which we walk, write, read, and dance. These levels consist of our students and the people we work with regularly. For Pinar, we live with the hope that this penetrable audience will echo what curriculum theorists are longing to share across spheres. (p.12)

As educators who have chosen a path with heart and are committed to incorporating Indigenous perspectives and ways of learning and knowing into our teaching, we may still be able to reach our students and colleagues in ways that inspire them to "become" the best versions of themselves, not only as teachers and students, but as human beings who share this earth (Chambers, 2004; Pinar, 2015; S. Deer, 2019). As Tanaka (2016) writes, **"**a tender resistance is one where we resist the harmful effects of the status quo while at the same time open our hearts to the collective hopes of who we can become" (p. 164), this as we also move from restorative to reflective nostalgia.

The second recommendation that the participants and I suggested in our fourth discussion is tied to the touchstone of reverse culture shock. In revisiting and re-evaluating the numerous ways that we encountered (and many years later, continue to encounter) reverse culture shock upon returning to southern Quebec post-Nunavik, and in discussing the difficulties we encountered (and continue to encounter) in re-adapting to our personal and professional lives, we stumbled upon what we believe can be a significant coping aid:

> Kim: *If we didn't meet to talk about this, I would still have a big question mark in my life about it. And it's something that's hard to talk about because not everyone went to the North.*
> Sara: *Yes, that's what's hard about it because you can't talk about it with any other friend.*
> Kim: *No, you can't talk about it because they don't understand.*
> Sara: *They don't understand what's happening.*
> Kim: *So I'm wondering if you think that it would be a good idea to offer some sort of, when the teachers leave the North,*
> Nathalie: *Ah, I think so.*
> Sara: *Ah, yes.*
> Kim: *A mandatory getting together,*
> Nathalie: *Definitely.*
> Kim: *Or discussion.*
> Nathalie: *By village or?*
> Kim: *I don't know, but you know how there's an orientation week before you go?*
> Nathalie: Yeah.
> Kim: *Well there should be a re-orientation when you come back.*
> Sara: *Yes. I think so because for real, they prepared us really well, I think, to go up, relatively, because there are still things that you can't know until you're there, but you can still research, you look at images, you speak to other teachers, but you don't see the teachers that come back after. You know the people who left before us who are back, you don't see them, you don't speak to them*
> Nathalie: *And they didn't always leave in a pleasant way.*
> Sara: *No.*
> Nathalie: *There are some who left angry I think, and maybe it would allow those people to*
> Sara: *That's it, there's absolutely no way of preparing to come back. And I understand why you would think you don't need to because you've always lived here so you don't really need to prepare but maybe it also depends on how much time you, like if I had spent 4 months up North, well maybe I wouldn't have needed so much,*
> Melissa: *Yes and there are also maybe some who really wanted to come back and they had negative experiences and they don't want to talk about it, they want to move on, so a kind of conference, yes, but maybe not mandatory.*
> Kim: *Yeah.*
> Melissa: *Yes it would be a good idea for those who need it, but I'm not sure that if you had a bad experience and you came that you would want to have that kind of meeting.*

> *You know, maybe it would remind you of the negative, so yes for those who would need it, for sure.* (disc4p.22-23)

When the participants and I first moved to Nunavik, we participated in an orientation week that was administered by the school board. Every newly hired teacher in the board is strongly advised to register for the orientation week. When I attended, the new teachers and I learned about Inuit history, culture, language and traditions, as well as some of the current socio-economic issues of the region which stem in large part from colonization, in addition to subject-specific curriculum that was presented by the school board's education consultants and some local elders. In order to gain a little understanding of the Nunavik Inuit reality, we were given room and board with Inuit families where we were also encouraged to observe the traditional family dynamic and taste country food. Some of us were lucky enough to be given advice from parents of school children, explore the village and the tundra, and even participate in cultural activities such as berry picking and four-wheel riding. While the school board's orientation week for new Nunavik teachers is a beautiful and enlightening experience, there is no such support offered to Nunavik teachers who return to the South.

The participants and I believe it would be very helpful for post-Nunavik teachers who struggle with reverse culture shock to be able to share their experiences with other returning teachers. The re-orientation does not have to last a week or include any formal type of presentations, but a simple opportunity to speak with others who are experiencing the same struggles would be of big help, as we would not feel so alone. I myself struggle with depression and resort to introversion in my attempts to cope with the anxieties of returning to Montreal. Melissa revealed during our fourth discussion that she too is struggling with some mental health issues since her return from Nunavik. While not all returning teachers experience such intense effects – although there is no information available that proves otherwise – there are certainly some that do, and being offered some type of support, even in the form of a phone-call, would help alleviate some of the pain and struggles; it would provide an acknowledgement that these tensions exist, and might offer some comfort in the fact that we are not alone.

Harper's (2000) article "'There is no way to prepare for this': Teaching in First Nations Schools in Northern Ontario" discusses how the teachers she interviewed about their experiences as non-Natives teaching in Native communities in northern Ontario felt that there was no way to prepare for their Northern teaching experience. The participants and I felt that the Nunavik

school board *does* attempt to prepare its newly hired teachers in a way that is relatively well planned and executed. As Sara stated above, *you can't [really] know [what it's like] until you're there*, and with the added benefit of Internet researching, we can at least have some idea of what to expect. On the other hand, returning teachers such as myself and my participants never imagined having to re-adapt to our own lives and society, or that it would be so challenging. Whereas Harper's (2000) participants were correct in stating that there is no way to prepare for going North, my participants and I believe that "*there's absolutely no way of preparing to come back*" (disc4p.23).

While there are many forms of support offered to teachers who go North, there are no initiatives that exist to support teachers when they return to the south, and this can lead to very significant, very difficult, and very painful psychological and social consequences. As my participants and myself continue to struggle with reverse culture shock numerous years after our return, the need for support is not only obvious but necessary. Speaking from personal experience, more often that not, it is human nature to rarely seek for help on our own, and by the time we muster the courage, additional time has gone by, making it more challenging to progress in our healing. Melissa and I have found therapy in writing. Chambers suggests that we "write with the blood of an actual life" (in Hasebe-Ludt et al, 2009, p.85) And, "as American sportswriter Walter Wellesley Smith famously quipped, 'There is nothing to writing. All you do is sit down at a typewriter and open up a vein'" (in Hasebe-Ludt et al, 2009, p. 85). But like Chambers who said, "sometimes I am afraid I will bleed to death" (in Hasebe-Ludt et al, p. 85), I am again reminded of the wisdom in Narcisse Blood's words: "it takes courage to write from life experience" (in Hasebe-Ludt et al, 2009, p. xvi). It also takes courage to seek help. I hope that post-Nunavik teachers find some way, like Melissa and I have, to cope and make progress in their healing. And in the spirit of reconciliation, I hope that the Nunavik school board is open to careful and generous listening, and that it will strongly consider our suggestion (Tanaka, 2016). I reiterate, **"**a tender resistance is one where we resist the harmful effects of the status quo while at the same time open our hearts to the collective hopes of who we can become" (Tanaka, 2016, p. 164). Not discussing our stories and memories of living and teaching in Nunavik with other post-Nunavik teachers may leave old wounds open, which could have a dangerous implication not only for ourselves, but for society, as it may hinder our abilities to see our experiences positively, and may unwillingly result in the spreading of more ill-informed and misguided views not

conducive to reconciliation. We firmly believe that it is the duty of the Nunavik school board to take active steps towards reconciliation by providing some sort of safe space for returning teachers to share and learn from their experiences.

An Occasion for Healing

By participating in collaborative self-study through memory work, narrative/poetic inquiry, and open-ended discussions, in which the participants and I shared memories and stories as in an Indigenous story-telling circle, we were able to make significant progress towards healing. As Archibald (2008) states of the transformative power of words, the stories that the participants and I shared "had the power to protect us and even heal us because the stories are alive" (p. 27). Through remembering, rewriting, retelling, relistening and revisiting our stories, we passed the stories through our hearts once again, making them come alive with new meaning, new understandings, and new lessons (Archibald, 2008; Chambers, 2004). This synergistic story power… brought the stor[ies] 'to life'" and as such, we were able to learn new lessons from them (Archibald, p. 100). Having further reflected on them for an additional year "created a synergistic power that had emotional, healing, and spiritual aspects" (Archibald, 2008, p. 100). When discussing our poems in the fourth discussion, the participants and I noted feeling a healthy detachment:

> Sara: *I think it's a good wrap-up, it's just that it's like I'm a bit detached. It's like this whole process of writing and revisiting the North, it's like it healed things and it's like now there's less…I read the poem and I understand what I wrote, and I agree with what I wrote, I find it reflects how I'm feeling with regards to the North, and also education in general … but for me it's a lot less emotional than it was last year. I'm more detached.*
> Kim: *Yeah. For me too, even if when I read it I was like oh boy, this is intense!… but I think that because we were deep in it, that's why it came out so rich, but that's good, that means that the conversations did help let things out that needed to come out, and like Sara said, I'm also detached a bit from it. It's funny because even if I'm working on this*
> Sara: *Yeah you're much more involved in the subject than me for example.*
> Kim: *Yes, but even so, I find myself a bit detached too. Like yes I think about the North, and especially when I read this, I remember things, but there's a space between it now, whereas before I was still in it, now,*
> Sara: *There's a distance.*
> Kim: *Yeah, it's like I'm looking into it and before I was still in it.*
> Nathalie: *I also feel like you but I don't know if it's a bit like what Sara was saying a bit about the healing, you know the text allowed us to*
> Sara: *It's like if there were still pains or things that were non-resolved.*
> Nathalie: *And now it like closed [the wound] a bit.*

Sara: *Yes it closed.*
Kim: *Ok, like closure. Excellent, that's awesome. Melissa?*
Melissa: *I find that, I would say it [the poem] the same way again today. It's very representative and when I talk about it, it's like that too. I wouldn't change anything, yes my outlook is more detached but it's still like this that I would tell the story.* (disc4p.7-8)

I stated earlier in this chapter that I was initially disappointed to learn of our detachment because I believed it signalled that we were not as invested in the inquiry as we had been. I was wrong. I understand now that the detachment is a positive outcome, as it signals the distance reached through the methods of 'storywork', and this distance allowed us to heal (Archibald, 2008).

In reference to Boym's (2001) notion of restorative and reflective nostalgia, Strong et al (2014) state that reflective nostalgia makes "the internal explicit through critical reflection so as to interrupt old discourses" (p.33). Through collaborative self-study, we were able to disrupt old discourses, thereby reconciling some of our most marked frustrations and concerns (Archibald, 2008; Strong-Wilson, 2006b). In order to make such realizations and growth, however, we required time. Much like Tanaka's (2016) notion of the 'second thought,' and the participants' desire to prolong the study with an additional year of reflection, Strong et al (2014) also suggest that the stages of restorative and reflective nostalgia require time: "time for… teachers to tell their stories, and time for them to mull over, discuss and re-frame them in light of 'new' stories" (p.33). As Hampl (1999) suggests: "If we learn not only to tell our stories but to listen to what our stories tell us … we are doing the work of memory" (p. 33). Memory work "involves linking personal response to professional practice" (Strong et al, 2014), and in our case, memory work also involved linking a personal response to a collaborative healing process. As the following excerpt of conversation shows, while writing our memory texts and poems gave us some relief individually, it was in discussing the memories and stories collaboratively that we were able to achieve closure and make significant progress in our healing:

Kim: *…writing all the different [artifacts]… made a lot of emotions come out, and memories. What do you think would have happened … if we never had these discussions? For me, for sure, I would still be inside that world and sad about it, whereas now I said it healed, I got closure from it and I'm finally detached from it. I'm not still inside of it, you know, so for me, if we didn't do this, I would, I'm here, but my heart would still be there.*
Sara: *Yeah… I realize that I'm more detached. I still have an attachment to the North, it will always be a part of me and when I talk about it, it's still something super positive, even if there were difficult things, but it's like a chapter of my life that's closed now… there's less nostalgia than before.*
Nathalie: *And there's also one more year.*

> Sara: *Yes, there's also one more year, there's less nostalgia, there's less, let's say for example when I receive news from [past Nunavik] students it's like there's less emotional impact on me … it used to really affect me, and now I'm not as emotionally [affected]… But on the other hand I think I'm much more on the social level. I think I'm implicated at a higher level in the Indigenous cause at large, not just my life in Nunavik.* (disc12-13)

Stories hold power. Stories tell, but they also listen (Sanchez-Soares, 2013). And in sharing stories, we can harness their potential transformative power to heal. "Stories take care of us," write Hasebe, Ludt et al (2009, p.151). And, in writing, sharing and discussing our stories, unbeknownst to the participants and I, stories had been taking care of us. As Tanaka (2016) states, "it is through dialogue that we create meaning and, through the creation of meaning, that we envision change. The therapeutic process of mutual understanding changes our stories together so that we can move towards the future" (p.139-140). Thus, in our story-sharing circle, we reconciled old meanings and created new knowledge of our stories for ourselves, and in doing so we not only made progress towards our own healing, but also, as our recommendations illustrate, with the well-being of others in mind. As Melissa's final contribution to the discussion underscores*: our [stories] are a part of us, if we didn't experience it would we be different? I don't know, but one thing I know for sure is that it brought us a lot of positive in general"* (disc4p.26).

Saying Goodbye

Across locations and times, through poetry and story-telling, the power of words in our journeys in this research can be seen as remembering as a pathway to forgiving (Eppert, 2003). For Hannah Tooktoo, the participants in this study, and myself, the importance of community in sharing stories is a critical part of reaching towards our respective goals, as without the circle of the story-tellers and listeners, there is no dialogue. Without dialogue, there is no sharing, there is no remembering, there is no learning, there is no forgiving and there can be no healing. The detachment that the participants and I felt in our fourth discussion, can therefore also be tied to the notion of using nostalgia as a method. Using nostalgia as a method involved patient listening to the stories we tell about our memories. Patient listening was tied to remembering, and remembering was tied to forgetting as a means towards forgiving and attaining peace; in this way, nostalgia allowed the possibility for healing (Eppert, 2003). Thus, the detachment that the participants and I felt in our fourth discussion can also be tied to the notion of nostalgia as

productive remembering, that is, as a means to forget in order to forgive and heal (Eppert, 2003; Hampl, 2009; Mitchell & Reid-Walsh, 2002; Strong-Wilson et al, 2013).

As Sara mentioned, this detachment also extends to the level of feeling less emotionally attached to our past Nunavik students. While we used to be significantly impacted by their hardships on a personal level, with each year that passes since our return there is a detachment that allows us to create a space between our own emotions and that pain. While this may seem negative at first, it signals that past feelings of personal guilt associated with our Eurocentric backgrounds have begun to make place for reconciliation. As Nathalie explained in our third discussion:

> *for me at the beginning when I got [to Nunavik] I felt guilty. In the orientation week they gave us a bit of history … From the beginning I felt guilty, and almost owing towards them, that we did them so much wrong. And at the same time it's a bit our fault if they have so many problems now. It doesn't help us, it doesn't excuse us…if the problem is there it explains it. But it was still hard to know that somewhere it's us, our values, our way of life, that created that history.* (disc3p.43)

Rather than feeling personally responsible for our past Nunavik students' struggles, we now turn our attention to spreading awareness, which is a more productive way to remember, as it helps us look toward the future rather than continuing to be bound by the past. The non-profit Montreal Indigenous Community Network (2019) states in their *Indigenous Ally Toolkit*, "being an ally is about disrupting oppressive spaces by educating others on the realities and histories of marginalized people" (p. 2). Thus, rather than focus on the past, the participants and I advocate for the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in our classrooms, for improved accessibility and curricula in Nunavik (for Inuit students and teachers), and make active efforts to spread awareness and correct negative and misinformed stereotypical views of Indigeneity. In our efforts to disrupt 'oppressive spaces' through a 'tender resistance' by educating students, colleagues, friends and family, we actively attempt to contribute towards reconciliation (MICN, 2019; Tanaka, 2016).

Acknowledging that the conversation is not about us feeling personally responsible for our past Nunavik students' socio-economic issues, is crucial, as

> …guilt should not be the main reason for why you want to be a part of ally work… As you educate yourself, you may grapple with these feelings of guilt and that is completely

> normal but what are more important are the steps and actions that you take afterwards[.] (MICN, 2019, p.6)

Educating oneself and others, however, is only part of what constitutes spreading awareness and support (MICN, 2019). According to the Montreal Indigenous Community Network (2019), "it is a lifelong process that is rooted in action and requires humility and ongoing critical self-reflection" (p.6). The following excerpt evokes the potential impact we had (and continue to have) in our relationships with our past students:

> Kim: *We talked a lot about the students and about conversations with the students from the North on Facebook or Messenger and that they still talk to us. And the fact that you [Nathalie] didn't think that we had such a big impact on them because you said that you thought that when we left, they'd forget us, but the fact that they still talk to us, you were very surprised by it, so my question is do you still talk to them? There was a little boy that you decided to "friend" on Facebook and you said that you were hesitating to do it, but the next discussion you told me that you did friend him, so did our discussion have influence on that?*
> Nathalie: *Yeah, he spoke to me again recently, and I told myself that even though I'm so far, if he wants to talk to me I will answer him…He asks me if I remember them, and I say of course I remember, I don't think I will ever forget you.*
> Kim: *Me, before our discussions, I didn't talk a lot, I would just say hi, I answered their questions but I didn't speak. I think that maybe I was scared, I didn't want to fall back into my sadness, nostalgia, so I kept*
> Sara: *A distance?*
> Kim: *Yes, a distance, and now I'm always talking to everyone. It's bizarre. Before maybe it hurt me you know because I missed them?*
> Sara: *Yeah maybe.*
> Kim: *And not now. Now I can talk to them no problem…even [past Nunavik student] out of nowhere sent me a message "Hi Kim," and I'm like "hi?" You know it's been 8 years that we haven't spoken, because he's not someone who spoke a lot, and [he said] "I'm in Montreal," and I'm like, "ok, are you ok?" He said "yeah my brother's in jail," I'm like "ok, are you ok, do you need help?" And he said "no I'm ok," so I said "ok, have a good day, bye," but before I would have never asked the question "do you need help?" because I*
> Nathalie: *You were scared of getting involved.*
> Kim: *Yes, but now it just came out by itself, I don't know. I'm sure that's because of those conversations that we had.* (disc4p.18-19)

Thus, by re-establishing connections with our past Nunavik students, we are also offering support as, "it is crucial to establish a direct line of communication – this could be through a friend directly involved or impacted by the struggles or through a volunteer position at a community organization" (MICN, 2019, p.7). This topic of conversation reminds me of how our

third discussion ended, with participants' hesitation in saying hello to Inuit in Montreal. The following excerpt of discussion shows how this question was revisited:

> Kim: *At the end of our last discussion we were talking about the Inuit in downtown Montreal and we were talking about how… you both were feeling awkward or scared to say hello, so my question is, did you say hello?*
> Sara: *I did not.*
> Nathalie: *I haven't been downtown very often since then.*
> Sara: *There's a couple who were near my house often this winter, extremely intoxicated… I don't know how to react. There's still a part of me that has a great sadness towards that, a great frustration to see them embody clichés, the public image that is made, and I would really want to say hello, and at the same time my Inuktitut is very rusty so…I wouldn't feel very good,*
> Kim: *Because we were talking about, I think it was on the show that you saw Melissa?*
> Melissa: *Yes, it was.*
> Kim*: She was saying that just a smile for them was like a big hug, you know, so I was just curious.*
> Sara: *I didn't say hello, no, I didn't say hello, unfortunately.*
> Nathalie: *I say hello to my neighbours [an Indigenous family who recently moved to Montreal from Alberta], but I don't see them [Inuit] anymore*. (disc4p.25-26)

While Nathalie and Sara did not say hello to Inuit living in Montreal, due in part to their hesitations regarding their locations as *Qallunaat* and fearing being offensive or misinterpreted, the participants and I did restore communication with our past Nunavik students. In these ways, saying or not saying hello does not mean that we are saying goodbye. In fact, restoring our relationships with past Nunavik students and keeping the lines of communication open means never saying goodbye. As Nathalie told her past Nunavik student on Facebook, we will never forget and we work actively to include the memories, stories, experiences and learning that we gained in our time there, thanks to our Inuit students and colleagues, towards our personal and professional lives here, in southern Quebec. When I asked if anyone had any last words, Nathalie remarked, "*there will never be a last one because it will never leave me*" (disc4p.26) to which I responded, "*there [will] never be an ending*" (disc4p.26). Not saying goodbye leaves the circle open for continued dialogue, and continued development and growth. Saying goodbye would close that circle and we are not now, nor ever will be inclined to do so, for in keeping the circle open, we pass the stories through our hearts yet again, and reawaken "the memories that hold some of the forgotten stories… [so that] the stories and the ability to make story meaning … stay alive" (Archibald, 2008, p. 81).

Poetry in Motion

As I stated in the beginning of this chapter, due to technical difficulties, the participants were not able to stay long as they wanted to, and we were unable to complete the collaborative found poetry activity that I had planned to include as a holistic and synergetic reflection in our fourth and final meeting. Before leaving, however, the participants did highlight key words/phrases from our four individual poems, which I then used to create a found poem. (It is important to note that I shared the found poem with the participants in the Facebook Messenger group, which we used for ongoing communication and particip-action throughout this study. All participants accepted the found poem as a final reflection of our collaborative inquiry.) As Butler-Kisber (2010) notes, found poetry is:

> the rearrangement of words, phrases and sometimes whole passages that are taken from other sources and reframed as poetry by changes in spacing and/or lines (and consequently meaning), or by altering the text by additions and/or deletions. The resulting poem can be defined as 'treated' (changed in a profound and systematic manner) or 'untreated' (conserving virtually the same order, syntax and meaning as in the original). (p. 84)

With the mass of different highlighted papers (four individual poems highlighted by four different participants resulted in sixteen highlighted papers) laid about my kitchen table, I had the overwhelming feeling that the task of combining all poems into one was larger than I imagined, larger not only because of the number of poems, but also because they were written in two different languages. According to Butler-Kisber (2010),

> there is no template or prescribed approach for creating found poetry. Some researchers start with the transcribed interviews and approach the work by categories and coding … and then they choose the most salient words within a particular theme/experience. Others … use forms of narrative/poetic transcription/analysis…to maintain and/or pull together the contiguous dimensions as well as the aural aspects of rhythm, pauses and emphasis of a particular story or experience from the outset, and then work with these field texts to craft a poem or poems. (p. 85-86)

I decided to create a found poem using our previous individual poems, as they represented portraits of our experiences living and teaching in Nunavik. I felt that creating a found poem using the four participant poems would offer a more effective and succinct technique in

pinpointing salient and recurring key words and themes tracked from the first day of our inquiry. As Butler-Kisber (2010) remarks, "compilations of found words and phrases become more specific and useful when they represent a collective of multiple voices" (p. 84).

Keeping the tenets of Indigenous methodologies in mind, I wanted to create an 'untreated' found poem to acknowledge the journey and thank the ceremony (Butler-Kisber, 2010; Wilson, 2008). I wanted to remain as genuine to the original poems as possible, out of respect for the memories, experiences, and story-sharing circle, and to listen carefully and respectfully, honouring the words selected by their authors (Archibald, 2008, Butler-Kisber, 2010; Wilson, 2008). In order to simplify the task, I made a list of words/phrases that were highlighted by at least two or three out of the four participants, aiming for as much corroboration as possible. The list was very telling: what I had written down were either long phrases in French, or single words in English. At first glance, the list told me how to organize the poem; I knew that I would incorporate single English words throughout the longer French phrases in order to unify the different languages and four different poems into one piece, while honouring the participant's natural pauses, line breaks, repetitions, omissions, metaphors, symbols, and rhythms (Cahnmann-Taylor, 2009; Prendergast, 2009). Doing so also gave importance to what was not being said, and allowed liminal spaces and marginal voices to be heard (see Chapter Three, The Fourth Stone: Poetic Inquiry).

Examining the list, I selected (French) phrases that I felt told a part of our journey. I then incorporated single English words throughout to punctuate and emphasize the ideas, therefore creating a dialogue between the outer actions expressed in French (or the "concrete," as Melissa noted) and the inner conscience (in English), or the "abstract" (Melissa, personal communication, April 24, 2019). In doing so, I found that the placement of the single English words between the longer French phrases also highlighted and mirrored the dual nature of the poem (interior/exterior; French/English; concrete/abstract) with the text itself (phrase/single word). The result is an amalgamation of the four original poems, in their original languages, that tell a story together as a whole (French *and* English), or separately as two different poems (French *or* English):[19]

Snap Shot

Du blanc, du froid, à l'infini

[19] See Appendix E for my English translations of the French phrases

Quiet
Écouter le silence
Change
Avancer, reculer, rêver
Unmasked
Ouvrir les yeux
Revealing
Le sourire qui touche
Cross cultural
Se rappeler, ne jamais oublier
Love.

Pushing the Memory: The Fourth Thought

In creating and reflecting on this found poem, the stories and memories were passed through the heart yet again (Chambers, 2004). This found poem also signaled having patiently listened and waited, as it was written some time after our fourth discussion, which took place after our additional year of reflection. As such, it represents what I term, again inspired by Tanaka (2016), the 'fourth thought.' Looking at just the French phrases, this poem describes the adventure of the experience, from beginning to end and from past to present. It demonstrates the ups and downs of the learning and adjustment processes, the importance of the land, the feeling of *other*, the language barrier, the participation in community, and ends with a realization/reminder: the North will always live inside of us.

Looking at just the English words, this poem expresses the internalization of external factors, and demonstrates how a quiet yet drastic change happened inside of each of us. Our past Nunavik experiences have had a substantial impact on our current personal and professional lives, and our deep love for the North is what continues to connect us to it as Indigenous supporters into the future. In my mind, the full poem creates a postcard-like image of a Northern landscape that captures and juxtaposes our inner struggles – quiet little whispers across the immensity of the vast land – and yet reflects a deep, inherent love. It is a succinct portrait of our Northern experiences, a picture in time, hence the title "Snap Shot" and as such alludes to the methodology of using photographs as prompts that began our memory work and journeys into the past.

The possibility of reading three poems in one also reflected the collaborative nature of this self-study. While each participant made her own realizations about her Northern experiences, and while we each wrote our own poems, we wouldn't have been able to do so

without the contributions of the three other participants. Similarly, the languages, ideas, memories, experiences, words and phrases used to create this found poem would not have been possible without the four original poems. Moreover, this poem corroborates the collection and analysis of data, as it suggests that although there are four different poems written by four different participants, they express similar thoughts and feelings that resulted in a multi-layered, multi-textured, multi-lingual, interconnected and interwoven fusion of metaphors, symbols and voices that read as one (Tanaka, 2016; Wilson, 2008). Having 'pushed the memory' and waited for the fourth thought, this found poem also captured the idea of having moved from restorative to reflective nostalgia (Boym, 2001). Words *quiet*/*listening to change* represent the transformations we experienced since our return from Nunavik, and the patient and quiet listening we practiced throughout the research that allowed us to transform and grow. *Unmasked* suggests how we became unsettled in sharing our settler stories and listening to the voices of our past Inuit students and colleagues. *Opening the eyes* and *remembering, never forgetting* reference the open circle of communication and reflection tied to our goals of spreading awareness and offering support.

During the revision process of my dissertation, I realized (and was helped to recognize) a strong dissonance: bringing the two languages together resulted in a poem that lacked rhythm and harmony. A complicated and problematic poem was not the way I wanted to represent our data, memories, experiences or voices, nor is it a respectful honouring of the Inuit people who have helped inform this study. I therefore went back to the found poem and the four participant poems to create a revised version of Snap Shot. I present a revised found poem that is more holistic, uniting the recurring words, themes and symbols in one common language. I share the revised version of Snap Shot as an embodied portrayal of our experiences living and teaching in Nunavik and our memories of those experiences since our return. Additionally, I feel that this revised version of Snap Shot, while more aesthetically pleasing, also portrays a clearer message:

Snap Shot

White, cold, infinity
Quiet
listening to change
advancing, retreating

Dreaming
Open eyes reveal smiles that cross

cultures remembering
Love unmasked

Stripped down to key words and void of punctuation, the revised found poem allows more space for the words breathe; more room to let the symbols resonate; more depth to amplify the voices underneath.

Chapter Eight – Skipping Stones: A Living Conclusion

"Teacher-research may not give us all the answers we crave, but it will help us find creativity and joy in living our questions." (Shagoury, 2011, p. 306)

"Conversation with self and others…is always a process of questing, questioning, and sojourning in words and worlds." (Hasebe-Ludt et al, 2009, pp. 1-2)

"Listen to your heart. It knows all things, because it came from the Soul of the World, and it will one day return there." (Coelho, 1998, p. 129)

Landmarks of Learning: Past, Present and Future

I am a nomad. I live between two worlds. I am an *other* who lives between three windows; one that looks into the past, one that looks at the present, and another that looks toward the future. I am neither here nor there. Twelve years ago, I travelled to Nunavik to teach. After four years I returned to Montreal. I have been back for eight years, but Montreal is no longer my home, nor will it ever be. I realized through this study that as a liminal being, I live in the spaces between. In my search for home, I recreate and reflect on my past living and teaching experiences in Nunavik (Boym, 2001).

Before having commenced this inquiry, I felt I was alone. In undertaking this study, research introduced me to a community of nomads, travelling teachers, pilgrims, sojourners and dwellers of the holes, gaps and spaces in, on, between and beyond the path with heart, with whom I share my struggles with reverse culture shock and liminality (Chambers et al, 2012; Hasebe-Ludt et al, 2009). Before this research I was unaware that there is a community of scholars who feel like my participants and I do; but I have found my place among them (Chambers et al, 2012; Grumet, 1981; Hasebe-Ludt et al, 2009; Pinar, 2012).

According to Pinar (2012), "conversation with oneself (as a "private" person) and with others threaded through academic knowledge, [is] an ongoing project of self-understanding in which one becomes mobilized for engagement in the world" (p.47). As a teacher and life-long pursuer of knowledge who grapples with reverse culture shock and liminality, I became interested in discovering if there were other post-Nunavik teachers who felt similar influences from their past Northern experiences in their current southern Quebec lives and practices. I wondered if my current teaching skills and methods, as well my interests in contributing to

reconciliation that I attribute to my past Nunavik experience, held similar implications for other returned teachers, and if so, I was interested in discovering what those specific influences and impacts are, and how they inform our current practices. In designing my study, I turned to Indigenous methodologies and ways of learning, knowing and doing, to help me create a holistic paradigm using the *inukshuk* as a model that would reflect and respect the Inuit culture and tradition of story-telling, to honour and listen to the people and communities who have inspired and helped inform this study, so as to continue a conversation that began with them rather than about them (Alcoff, 1991; Cole & Knowles, 2008; Smith, 1999; Wilson, 2008). In telling our stories the participants and I listened 'with three ears' to the stories of our past but also to the stories of our Nunavik Inuit students and colleagues (Archibald, 2008). Through nostalgia, memory work and storywork, we examined our collective memories and experiences, re-storying our histories to uncover symbols, metaphors and truths that were lurking in the shadows (Archibald, 2008; Boym, 2001; Hampl, 1999; Regan, 2010). By illuminating the self through poetry, analysis and open sharing in a circle, passing through second, third and fourth thoughts (inspired by Tanaka) as we re-visited our memories and practices, we realized how our past Inuit students and colleagues continue to inform our present lives and practices and contribute to our future.

Towards a Curriculum of Reconciliation

In a study that began with the search for the influences from our past that impact our present and contribute to our future, we began "the difficult process of learning how to listen differently to these stories – to engage in the act of bearing witness as an ethical undertaking" (Regan, 2010, p. 18). We listened to stories of our past Inuit students and colleagues, and also to our settler stories; that is, to our stories as the ancestors of colonizers (Regan, 2010). In this way, we listened in an attempt to re-story our history (Regan, 2010).

Four Phases, Four Thoughts

In this section I discuss and re-interpret my research findings through a *currere* lens, for in sharing the stories of our Nunavik experiences, the participants and I awakened and unsettled our settler consciousness, allowing us to re-story our collective history towards a decolonizing reconstruction of curriculum, pedagogy and society (Archibald, 2008; Grumet, 1981; Pinar,

2012; Regan, 2010): reflective nostalgia. In sharing our settler stories, the participants and I inadvertently followed Pinar's (2012) method of *currere*, as its four phases "point to the temporal structure of educational experience … through the reconstruction of academic knowledge and lived experience" (p. 44). Because our educational experience is comprised of the reciprocal relationship between academic knowledge and lived experience, "we enable understanding of the public world as we discern our privately formulated way through it" (p. 44).

On the first day of inquiry, during its regressive step, the participants and I re-experienced and revisited our past experiences of living and teaching in Nunavik (Pinar, 2012). To stimulate our memories, we used photographs as prompts to re-enter the past (Pinar, 2012). We re-experienced our memoires, examining them collaboratively from each of our four individual views, including those of our past Inuit students and colleagues, thereby re-experiencing how the past triggers reconsideration of our present lives and practices (Pinar, 2012). The emphasis in this first stage was on the past, "not (yet) its reconstruction in the present," as "in the regressive phase free association enables recovery of repressed material that provides additional 'information' for understanding the present [we] inhabit now" (Pinar, 2012, pp. 45-46). Thus, on our first day of inquiry, we delved into the self, inquiring into what omissions or errors we had made in the writing of our memory texts, illuminating and recovering "repressed material" that provided "additional information" to be included in the second drafts of our memory texts (Hampl, 1999; Pinar, 2012, pp. 45-46).

On the second day, in *currere*'s progressive phase, the participants and I explored the symbols in the second drafts of our memory texts, those that revealed what was not yet present (Pinar, 2012). To illustrate, Sara's symbol of the *suvalik* (berry and fish egg/oil mixture) or my symbol of the snow globe represented our fears of not being able to cope with our "imagined possible futures" as well as our fantasies (Pinar, 2012, p. 46). Sara's symbol revealed inklings of her growing frustrations with the education system, which continued to increase throughout the study but with no solution yet present, and my recurring use of flowery language pointed towards denying the fantasy I had created of an idyllic past.

In *currere*'s analytical phase or our third day, the participants and I examined both the past and present, using our individual poems to connect influences from our past Nunavik experiences to our current lives and practices (Pinar, 2012). Here, as a result of having patiently waited for the 'second thought,' we were able to create a distance from the past and from "future

functions to create a subjective – third – space of freedom in the present … wherein we attempt[ed] to discern how the past inheres in the present and in our fantasies of the future" (Pinar, 2012, p. 46; Tanaka, 2016). In what we believed to be our final discussion, we attempted to "understand how culture and history have become particularized in the specificity of the subjectivity within which [we] dwell and from which [we] work" (Pinar, 2012, p. 46). In reaching towards an answer to the research question, however, we realized that we required additional time to reflect in this "third space," which I coincidentally termed, the 'third thought,' to more fully and accurately explore the influences and impacts of our past experiences on our current lives, and how they might contribute to our future (Pinar, 2012, p. 46).

In the synthetical phase, or on our fourth day, we re-entered the lived present after one year of additional reflection on our past and present experiences (Pinar, 2012). In our final discussion, we were noticeably detached; we had progressed from restorative to reflective nostalgia, and in doing so, we became conscious of our "embodied otherness," and we confronted and accepted our own "alterity in public," as liminal beings (Boym, 2001; Pinar, 2012, p. 46). We listened carefully to the stories of our past Inuit students and colleagues, but also to our inner voices – to our settler stories – and asked: "what is the meaning of the present?" or in other words, why do we act as we do? (Pinar, 2012, p. 47) And further, how do we reconcile the curriculum? How do we contribute to social justice? We discovered, as our response to the research question, that we will continue learning and growing, with our past Nunavik experiences embedded in every aspect of our lives and identities. Our perpetual search for knowledge is like an "electric current," as it ignites our passion for learning, teaching, and social justice (Pinar, 2012, p. 47). It an intense spark that courses from within, from our past into the present and towards the future; it is "that which electrifies or gives life to [our] energy source" (Pinar, 2012, p. 47). In this fourth phase, as the result of having waited for the 'fourth thought,' the found poem 'Snap Shot' articulates our commitment to social justice and education, and how that commitment courses through every fibre of our beings; it is in this moment when "self-study becomes reconstructed as public service" (Pinar, 2012, p. 47). By questioning the status quo and disrupting hegemonic discourse, we took steps towards the reconstruction of society in the light of reconciliation. I recall being initially disappointed by the detachment we felt in our fourth discussion. Our detachment or "distanciation," as Grumet (1981) calls it, is a necessary process in the awakening of our settler stories. Through the process of *currere*,

distanciation allows the excavation of what is lurking in the shadows and spaces of our autobiographical texts, as it

> shows the author of the piece the way in which he has construed his experience and reveals the ways in which curriculum has invaded his own perceptual lens. It reveals that this apparent subjectivity is a highly socialised one, and carefully tailored to the assumptions about time and space, community, knowledge, and power that are the dominant ideologies of our society. It discovers the future that has been hovering in and around the past and provokes the student to name both the silent and the silencers. (Grumet, 1981, p. 128)

Through memory work, storywork, and *currere*, the participants and I were ultimately able to bring to light what was hiding in the spaces. Without sharing our settler stories, we would not be able to acknowledge the silence of the status quo and question the silencers who continue to enforce a colonizing pedagogy, as we too would be kept in the problem of the present, shrouded in the darkness of a miseducated curriculum.

Reconciling Settler Stories: Unsettling Curriculum and Pedagogy

Although the participants and I were able to acknowledge our participation in an education system and society that continues the legacy of colonization, and we are committed to contributing to reconciliation in our personal and professional lives, there is nonetheless little dialogue between education policy makers, historians, and curriculum designers that allow educators to focus on "pedagogical issues related to public history education and commemorative practices associated with remembering a difficult past" (Regan, 2010, p. 12). That leaves the participants and I alone in our practices in attempting to spark transformative change in our schools and classrooms with our efforts to bridge the gap between non-Indigenous and Indigenous peoples in Canada. While we incorporate Indigenous perspectives into the curriculum, Regan (2010) warns that even while the strong emotions that students can face by listening to Indigenous stories of suffering due to the legacy of colonialism may be potentially decolonizing, they also may produce an empathetic response, which despite being "well intentioned, is still colonial in nature" (p. 12). Within this context, then, "reconnecting reason

and emotion – head and heart – is integral to an unsettling pedagogy" (Regan, 2010, p. 12). As Regan (2010) writes,

> I was just beginning to appreciate the richness of the gift I had received from residential school survivors. Sometimes, we are offered a gift that we are reluctant to accept. Perhaps we do not recognize it as a gift because it feels like a burden, like a heavy responsibility that we don't quite know how to carry, and we are afraid that we will do so poorly. I now realize that their gift is a life teaching that I will always carry with me and continue to learn from in new, unsettling ways.
>
> Part of the struggle of writing as truth telling has been to make sense of my own decolonizing journey in a way that honours the gift. I write as honestly as I can about what I have learned in the critical hope that it might serve as some small catalyst in thinking about how we, as settlers, might breathe life into Canada's apology. This is my truth. So I write not about survivors' stories, for they are not mine to tell, but of my own unsettling. This is my reciprocal gift to [them] – offered with humility, in the spirit of acknowledging, honouring, and remembering their teachings. (p.18)

I quote Regan (2010) above as a reflection of my own feelings, although I must make one crucial amendment and significant distinction: I tell my settler story and those of my participants, not as a gift to my past Inuit students and colleagues, but as a gentle offering of respectful listening and open dialogue, as only then, will there be a real hope for provoking change. As Pinar (2012) writes,

> conceived as a complicated conversation, the curriculum is an ongoing effort at communication with others that portends the social reconstruction of the public sphere … The present has been historically conceived, and so it is in the past we begin to seek the meaning of the present and our way to the future. (p.47)

Thus, as the participants and I have learned through this inquiry, it was by memory work, collaborative self-study and critical reflection and storywork, that we were able to encounter and confront the spaces, gaps and holes in our settler stories, in an effort to understand the influences from our past, their current impacts, and future implications for our personal and professional lives (Archibald, 2008; Pinar, 2012; Regan, 2010). By re-storying our personal histories, and re-awakening the past and present impacts of colonial educational policies, we intertwined historical facts with our own stories, together with those of our Inuit students and colleagues, in a

way that made the past come alive in an effort towards correcting and reconciling the curriculum in our own practices and classrooms (Archibald, 2008; Regan, 2010). By re-storying and unsettling our settler stories, we realized that keeping the circle of communication and collaboration open is key in our efforts to decolonize the prescribed curriculum and inspire colleagues, students and family members to take steps towards acknowledging their own settler stories in an effort to contribute towards reconciliation.

Some ways to decolonize our curriculum would be to invite Indigenous story-tellers, artists, musicians and dancers into our classrooms and schools, and to organize field trips to museums and friendship centers, where students and Indigenous peoples can share stories of their own life experiences, "as a way of provoking critical reflection in others, while continuing to learn themselves. Decolonizing stories told in this manner are an interactive exchange between teller and listener in which both learn and teach" (Regan, 2010, p. 31). While I have begun and will continue to decolonize curriculum by incorporating the perspectives, stories, and cultural traditions of Indigenous peoples, I have often been met by administrative roadblocks. Whether it is due to a lack of funding, or because the projects do not meet the educational criteria determined by colleagues, commissioners, and/or parents of governing boards, this only increases my motivation to contribute to social justice education, as it indicates a profound need for continued awareness in order to dismantle the status quo of settler pedagogy in which most Canadians continue to live.

As Hannah Tooktoo put it, in order to provoke change, we need to stop talking about reconciliation and take steps towards "reconcili-action" (Kurz, 2019). We need to question the oppressors who continue the colonial project in every sphere of our lives. We need to decolonize communication and collaboration. We need to listen respectfully and wait patiently. We need to spread awareness. We need to take up a 'tender resistance' and encourage everyone to listen with 'three ears', 'two eyes', open hearts and open minds (Archibald, 1990; Archibald, 2008; Tanaka, 2016). We need to re-write history so we can re-story our present, otherwise, we are heading into a bleak and dismal future that is tied to the mistakes of our past. Unless we provoke change as supporters, unless we inspire transformative inquiry as educators who have the potential to reach thousands of people throughout our careers, we are heading into a dangerous future. As the tensions between cultures and religions rise in Quebec, a phenomenon that can be felt across the country and across the world, the status quo is contributing to the spread of hate rather than love.

This is my call for support from my colleagues and fellow Canadians, not as an Inuit, and not as a *Qallunaak*, but as a human being who lives on this earth. As educators, we have the duty to use our platforms to create not just pedagogical, but societal change, and as Canadians, we have the responsibility to re-write our history, collaboratively, in the present, so we can re-story our future. As Hasebe-Ludt et al (2009) write, and as I have agreed, "stories take care of us" but more importantly, we need to take care of each other (p. 151). In the words of Paulo Freire (1997):

> As I speak with such hope about the possibility of changing the world, I do not intend to sound like a lyrical, naïve educator. I recognize reality. I recognize the obstacles, but I refuse to resign in silence or to be reduced to a soft, ashamed, sceptical echo of the dominant discourse. We are transformative beings and not beings for accommodation. (In Prendergast and Leggo, 2007, p. 1463.)

Limitations

Although the participants and I examined the research question from various perspectives, acknowledging and considering our past Inuit students and colleagues as we delved deep into the self, including unsettling our own settler stories, it may be argued that this study has a particular gendered, ageist and cultural location. The participants who accepted to take part in the study, including myself, are all white females of European descent in their early to mid-thirties. There are no male teachers, older teachers, or teachers that represent cultural groups other than of European background. While this was not my intent, I do recognize the fact that this lack of diversity may be excluding the experiences and perspectives of other teachers who have gone to Nunavik to teach, who have returned, and who continue to teach in southern Quebec. Based on their availably and interest in participation, the only positive answers I received were from three women of similar age and ethnic background. As I discussed in Chapter Four, while there was one male who was initially interested in participating, he later chose to exit the study for personal reasons. The village that I taught at in Nunavik was a small community with a population of 400, and the majority of non-Inuit teachers that I met there were young males and females of European ancestry who were beginning their careers. While there were some older teachers, these teachers came out of their retirement to travel and visit the North and used teaching as a means to do so. When they returned to southern Quebec, they did not

continue teaching, and therefore did not qualify as candidates. While there was a very small minority of teachers from different cultural backgrounds that I encountered in the village over the years (only two teachers in a total of four years), they either continued teaching in Nunavik or left the profession, which also disqualified them as participants. I recognize that incorporating these different teacher perspectives could provide potentially significant interpretations and findings other than those I have discovered. I am very interested in how those different perspectives could contribute to this research and am curious to discover if and how incorporating them would affect the results. This seems to me like a potential avenue for future research in this area.

It can also be argued that another limitation regarding the participants may also be the lack of teachers who taught in Nunavik for a shorter period of time, and/or those who had negative experiences. Including these perspectives, however, may do more harm than good, and I do not recommend exploring those views. First, ethical principles in research with human subjects requires that no harm is caused as a result of participation in a research study. The teachers who have had shorter experiences often left early due to a negative situation. I do not believe that causing the participants to relive their experiences would be ethical. Instead, healing should be a priority, and is therefore a second reason why I emphasize the importance for the Nunavik school board to seriously consider our suggestion to offer services or keep dialogue open with post-Nunavik teachers. Moreover, while including these perspectives is not only unethical and possibly harmful to the participants, the views of those teachers would contribute to existing and further damaging stereotypes of the Inuit people who have informed this study and take away from our efforts at reconciliation with Indigenous communities across Canada. For these reasons, I am strongly and adamantly opposed to that claim.

Finally, it may also be argued that this study does not contain an Inuit voice to counter my and my participants' stories. First, to my knowledge, there are no Nunavik Inuit teachers who have left Nunavik to teach in southern Quebec. For lack of funding, I was unable to travel with my participants to Nunavik, or to accommodate a Nunavik teacher in Montreal to participate in the four days of inquiry. I must emphasize, however, that this study is concerned with settlers; with *Qallunaat* teacher's experiences and influences on their current practices. As we now teach in urban milieus, we no longer have any Inuit colleagues in our current practices. This study is concerned with the learning we attained there and how we implement it here, as a result of

having gone North. In sharing our settler stories and excavating the memories, we included the perspectives of our past Inuit students and colleagues, and their voices have informed every aspect of this thesis. Additionally, I attempted to frame chapters within current Indigenous contexts and using the perspectives and voices of Indigenous scholars as decolonizing and Indigenous methodologies at the forefront of my theoretical and methodological frameworks.

Contributions of this Study to Research and Practice

My study began with an interest in discovering what influences from my past Nunavik teaching experience continued to inform my present practice in Southern Quebec, and if there were other teachers returned from Nunavik who felt like me. It arose from a deep need to want to understand and come to terms with my nostalgia and feelings of liminality.

The research showed how, through collaborative self-study grounded in memory work and poetic inquiry, nostalgic remembrance can be shifted, opening spaces for decolonizing pedagogies. While narrative and poetic inquiry helped expose unexpected outcomes of participation, facilitating healing ways of thinking and feeling, it was the re-envisioning of nostalgia through a *currere* lens that helped bring out the far distance travelled from the inception of the inquiry to its close through the four phases of *currere*, and the implications of this collective self-work for changing the prevailing colonial story to one that supports reconciliation. Transformation could not have been attained without the deep reflection and critical thinking that was encouraged and supported by participant sharing, highlighting the importance of collaborative self-study on subjects of collective concern (viz., decolonization). The unexpected outcome of *particip-action*, a term I created to account for my participants' high level of commitment to the questions animating this study, leading not only to second but third and fourth thinking, helped deepen as well as nuance the implications of teacher movement South to North, North to South; these are teachers who comprise a large cadre of the working force in teaching Indigenous students – and in teaching to Indigenous subjects in schools in the South. Before beginning this research, my participants and I struggled with feelings of exile, as we felt we belonged neither here nor there. As a result of our collective self-study, we have reconciled our liminality, making peace with our places in between, and finding ways to employ those spaces to incorporate Indigenous perspectives in our classrooms. In these ways, this dissertation contributes to literature on liminality and third spaces in the area of decolonizing

teacher education. The touchstones of social justice implications and our recommendations for *reconcili-action*, provide suggested avenues for future research, in an effort to contribute to reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples living in Canada. In the area of teacher education and preparation, this thesis contributes in original ways to considerations of not only *preparation* but also *return*, this for teachers considering teaching or currently teaching in Nunavik or other Indigenous communities in Canada. This study helps theorize and elaborate on the phenomenon of teachers returning from Nunavik who struggle with reverse culture shock. Methodologically, too, my study has contributed in an original way to decolonizing forms of qualitative research. I created an original methodological framework in the form of an *inukshuk*, and later igloo, which are hybridizations of Western and Indigenous ways of knowing. These synergetic conceptualizations of the medicine wheel contribute to Indigenous studies within the context of ally scholarship, settler theory, and decolonizing research methods and methodologies.

Future Research Questions

The participants and I have transformed our learning and practices as a result of participation in this study. Incorporating Indigenous perspectives in our curriculum and our stances as Indigenous supporters are the most felt impacts of having returned from living and teaching in Nunavik, but these outcomes are specific to us four individuals, and were realized through the research process in collective sharing and patient listening. "As I complete this writing, I find that I have more questions than when I began" (Tanaka, 2016, p. 209). What of the returned teachers who have not had an opportunity to discuss their memories and experiences of living and teaching in Nunavik? How do they reconcile their past with their present? What lessons have they learned, and how are they incorporated in their practices – or are they included at all? Do they continue to feel as exiles, do the struggles of liminality and reverse culture shock persist? Have they considered returning to Nunavik to teach, and if so, why or why not? Are there teachers who have returned from Nunavik only to go back? What are the implications of returning to Nunavik to teach? And do those teachers return to Nunavik with new knowledge from their previous experiences, or do they inadvertently continue the colonial project? Moreover, how does returning from Nunavik, and/or going back impact teacher attrition in both the North and South? How does returning to Nunavik after having returned to southern Quebec impact relationships with Inuit students and colleagues? How does it impact the teacher's critical

reflection, if there is no examination of memories? No unsettling of the settler? Do the teachers remain in a restorative state of nostalgia? Are they then able to listen to the needs of their students and adapt the curriculum accordingly? Do they attempt to decolonize curricula? Furthermore, if the teachers have left the profession altogether, what has caused them to do so? Was it because there was no opportunity for discussion and collaborative reflection? Could this have been avoided? What could be done in terms of professional development or support that can encourage the returned teachers to continue their practices? And finally, how do post-Nunavik teachers identify themselves if not as post-Nunavik teachers?

Further Suggestions

In chapter seven, I presented ideas for future research that my participants suggested as a result of having participated in this study. One participant (Melissa) mentioned how this study could potentially inspire the Nunavik school board to focus on collaboration in curriculum between *Qallunaat* and Inuit teachers and Elders, as well as teacher training for both *Qallunaat* and Inuit teachers, accessibility for higher and vocational education, and even, exploring the psychological effects of the Nunavik experience on returned teachers.

I presented our thoughts with regards to the importance of collaboration in the design, planning, implementation and delivery of Nunavik curricula. While not the focus of the thesis, we believe that the Nunavik curriculum should be conceptualized to cater to the needs of Nunavik students and their communities rather than focusing on southern Quebec education policies. The present Nunavik curriculum does not adequately address students' needs, learning styles or goals, and does not encourage students to continue their education, as evidenced by the alarmingly high Nunavik school dropout rate (which as of 2018 is 74%).[20] Collaboration between Inuit and *Qallunaat* teachers would allow for the creation of a more suitable curriculum that is respectful of students' needs, interests and learning styles, and the utilization of natural resources and Elders in the design and delivery of learning objectives would result in a more successful school environment conducive to the well being of both teachers and students alike. *Qallunaat* teachers have much to learn from their Inuit counterparts, and we therefore believe

[20] Page, J. (2018, October 27). Quebec Education Ministry ignored pleas to help students in Nunavik succeed, ombudsman says. *CBC News*. Retrieved from https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/quebec-education-ministry-ignored-pleas-to-help-students-in-nunavik-succeed-ombudsman-says-1.4878146

that further research in this area is necessary for an inclusive curriculum based on teamwork and respectful listening.

Teacher training is another topic that should be further explored, as we believe the current process for Inuit teachers to receive a Bachelor of Education is inaccessible and far too lengthy. We believe that teacher training should be reformed to increase the number of Inuit teachers in Nunavik, as they are a substantial source of critical knowledge that is vastly undervalued, and the lengthy process of teacher training discourages local Inuit from becoming teachers, which leaves this potential source of vital knowledge untapped. Additionally, while we agree that the Orientation week for newly hired *Qallunaat* teachers is necessary, various workshops or teacher training courses should be offered by the Nunavik school board for continued professional development throughout the school year. Providing a means for *Qallunaat* teachers to learn about Inuit culture, history, traditions, and ways of thinking, knowing and doing, would permit further understanding and insights for *Qallunaat* teachers that may positively contribute to their practice in Nunavik, as well as may help decrease the overall teacher turnover rate. Offering *Qallunaat* teachers support and guidance in these ways could result in the development of teaching methods and skills that are more in line with Inuit rather than *Qallunaat* values, and inspire *Qallunaat* teachers to participate more actively in community events. This in turn could positively affect their relationships with Inuit students and colleagues, and could therefore be a significant and efficient way to increase teacher retention with the goal of creating a more holistic school team and increased sustained school environment that would be less likely to disrupt students' learning processes.

Finally, we believe that further research is required in the areas of higher and vocational education in Nunavik, in an effort to increase equal opportunities for all Inuit students. The current system of sending students to study in southern Quebec does not offer Inuit students an equal learning opportunity, as Inuit students are obliged to undergo a complete uprooting in order to pursue their educational goals. Inuit students who come to Montreal with the goal of obtaining a higher education risk experiencing the damaging effects of culture shock, homesickness and loneliness as they are separated from their families, communities, culture and language, which continues the legacy of colonization, and sounds too eerily familiar to the residential school system. The small number of Inuit students who attempt pursuing their education in southern Quebec is significantly decreased as the majority return to Nunavik after

the first semester, unable to adapt to city life and cope with southern academic pressures with which they are unfamiliar. While they are followed by counsellors and form relationships with fellow Inuit students, the obstacles are too great and the conditions too unfavourable to be conducive to a positive learning experience. Further research is required in this area to find a more efficient way for Nunavik Inuit students to pursue their education, for example with the creation of a Nunavik college and/or university. While there is a technical and vocational centre for adults in one of the fourteen Nunavik communities, there should be more opportunities available for students from both coasts (Ungava Bay and Hudson Bay), as there are coastal differences in language and culture that discourage students from travelling to a different coast to pursue their education. While I do not know of any previous research that provides evidence for these claims, and therefore points towards a need for further research in this area, I discuss these issues here as a result of my experiential knowledge and base it on previous personal conversations and discussions I have had with some of my past Nunavik students who have attempted to pursue higher and/or vocational education in Montreal and Nunavik, both during my time there and since I have returned.

All of the issues discussed in this section are of great concern to me as a former Nunavik resident and teacher. They are also of great concern to me as a current Indigenous ally, and it is my sincere wish that these questions, concerns and recommendations for further study are heeded in an effort to contribute to reconciliation towards the future, for the benefit of all Canadians. In an effort to bridge the gap between our many and varied differences, it is imperative that we re-story our present and re-write our history together, for improved relations and equal opportunities that are inclusive, representative, respectful and reflective of all cultures and languages towards a collective and harmonious Canada that values and supports every individual, Indigenous and non-Indigenous and all the voices in between.

Chapter Nine – Ripple Effects/Afterword: Beyond the Study

"Indigenous research is a life changing ceremony." (Wilson, 2008, p. 61)

Creating Ripples

According to Wilson (2008), "if research doesn't change you, then you haven't done it right" (p. 135). I underwent this study in an attempt to reach towards an answer to the research question, but have learned much more in the process. My goal was to discover what influences from past Nunavik experiences exist in present southern Quebec teacher practices, and how those influences impact our current teaching and lives post-Nunavik. Within the framework of Indigenous methodologies, exploring my past Nunavik experience through memory work, collaborative self-study and poetic inquiry helped reveal aspects of my experiences, memory and identity that were hidden, forgotten, or ignored, and illuminated the various ways in which they are manifested in the present and contribute towards my future. Discovering and excavating symbols and listening to voices that were silent allowed the development and growth of meaningful learning in personal and professional spheres. As a researcher I overcame numerous struggles with the hybridization, validation and presentation of data analysis and presentation of results. Fusing Indigenous, holistic and storied ways of learning, knowing and doing, with Western, academic and scientific concepts and notions demanded in the rigorous world of academe was no easy task, so I followed my intuition and chose the path with heart, listening to the data and allowing the research to guide me in the directions that it wanted to go; in the ways that it wanted to be seen. Allowing myself to view the data from different perspectives in respecting the tenets of Indigenous methodologies while adhering to Western research codes and conducts opened up a larger field of vision that would have otherwise gone unexplored and would have limited the scope and depth of the findings. While there are still many questions, that may never have an answer, the act of inquiry has generously gifted me insights that I otherwise would not have discovered, and possibilities for future research that may not have been previously considered. As a researcher I have been able to contribute to the theoretical and methodological areas of memory work, nostalgia, self-study, nomadic literature, poetic inquiry, curriculum theory and decolonizing methodologies, and with the help of my participants, we have been able to contribute to each other's professional development, and personal healing processes, as well as suggest recommendations for the improvement of teacher training,

education policy, student well being and reconciliation. Furthermore, I have learned how to cope with my liminality through the realization that I am connected to the past, present and future in all of my relations and that story and Spirit are alive and will continue to accompany me on my journey of becoming.

As Wilson (2008) writes, "Indigenous research *is* a life changing ceremony" (p.61), and I have changed as a result of conducting and participating in this study in more ways than one. The participants and I experienced growth in our personal, professional and political spheres, but participating in this research has also had a direct impact on our teaching, particularly in the sphere of social justice education, and as such, has been a transformative inquiry (Tanaka, 2016). Transformative inquiry (TI) is "a mindful approach to inquiry that is highly informed by and embedded in an indigenist sensibility" (Tanaka, 2016, p. 203). According to Tanaka (2016), "while similar to other forms of teacher inquiry, the TI approach is intimately informed by pedagogical style of wisdom keepers…along with…other indigenous pedagogical encounters" (p. 202). As such, "the overall sensibility of TI is that of mindful, reflexive engagement and relational accountability" (Tanaka, 2016, p. 203). While we are not able to make sweeping changes in educational, social and political policies and ideologies, the participants and I have vowed to include Indigenous perspectives through the lens of our settler stories in our teaching as a result of TI. In an effort to dispel misinformed views of Indigeneity that are propagated by a miseducated pedagogy, as individual advocates for change within our milieus, we hope to initiate the decolonization of curriculum and dismantle the legacy of colonialism in our schools.

A key aspect of TI is acknowledging the inner spirit and personal direction of each learner (Tanaka, 2016). As such, the TI that we approach within our classrooms and school settings "requires deep reflexivity on personal location within existing educational paradigms and encourages accessing other ways of knowing" (Tanaka, 2008, p. 203). We will therefore encourage students and possibly inspire colleagues to take their own steps in contributing towards reconciliation through exploration and presentation of different artistic and written expressions in our efforts to foster the critical self-reflection that is necessary for creating change. By incorporating artistic and creative projects in our teaching subjects that tell stories of Indigenous and settler history, and by posting them in hallways and common areas of our schools, we can take small steps that will allow for a larger conversation to develop. As students share and discuss their work with friends, and colleagues inquire about the projects, awareness

can spread through dialogue and may spark other students' and teachers' interests, possibly inspiring them to participate in the conversation and take their own steps towards learning and reconciliation. The hope is to nurture a heighted awareness and create a space for dialogue and learning that no matter how small, is a step that nonetheless leads in the direction of decolonization and reconciliation of our school environments. While we can not reconstruct society at large, we can at least attempt to re-write and re-story our school's history of colonization, in an effort to reach as many members of the school community as possible (teachers, students, parents, administrators and other school staff).

This past year, for example, I volunteered to manage and implement a school-wide Native literacy project. With funding from a professional development and innovation grant donated to the school, I designed learning and evaluation situations to be incorporated within the English literature curriculum of the secondary one and two levels of the middle school where I taught, which has a largely white middle class population. With the help of two open-minded colleagues and a principal who has Native ancestry, I created six units using Canadian Native literature that are now available for all present and future English teachers of the school to incorporate in their English Language Arts curriculum. The units include full class sets of material including teacher guides and student workbooks that we created collaboratively, including a curated list of various resources to supplement both teachers' and students' learning with the goal of spreading awareness and contributing to reconciliation. While all teachers may not feel inclined or comfortable in their abilities or knowledge to take on such projects on their own, the care we took in creating comprehensive and detailed explanations for use of materials, and ideas for activities that challenge students to explore learning through Indigenous ways of thinking and doing, offer teachers a user-friendly way that encourages artistic and creative expression to provoke critical thinking.

Throughout the year I incorporated aspects of a unit I created using Richard Wagamese's novel *Indian Horse* with my enriched secondary two English class as a pilot project, to ensure that the materials my colleagues and I were creating were adequately meeting our goals and as an opportunity to revise and tweak any aspects of the units that required improvement for effective transfer of knowledge. I believe that education is not simply about the transfer of knowledge but is a "transformative experiential learning that empowers people to make change in the world" (Regan, 2010, p. 23). Thus, in an effort to contribute towards reconciliation, I began the unit by

introducing my students to the legacy of colonialism through documentaries in which students listened to survivors tell their stories of the residential school era and its effects on their lives, communities and cultures.

As discussed in the previous chapter, hearing the stories as told by the survivors themselves allows for the development of a different kind of listening in learning from the other rather than about the other, which allows an exchange of dialogue that fosters the development of critical thinking. I was not surprised to learn that my students had not previously heard of residential schools and many did not even know who Indigenous peoples were, or that Indigenous peoples exist. I therefore incorporated Indigenous music, art, story-telling, creation stories, cultural traditions, Spirituality and dance into the unit as a means of expanding their views on Inuit, Metis and First Nations groups in Canada. "For many non-Native Canadians, residential school survivors' stories will provoke powerful feelings of denial, guilt, and shame. We find these narratives of violence, trauma, and loss deeply disconcerting" (Regan, 2010 p. 50). As Regan (2010) writes, "undertaking such a task can be emotionally disturbing for settlers," and many of my students felt overwhelming emotions that they expressed openly in the safe space and family environment of our classroom (p. 50). "Failure to link knowledge and critical reflection to action explains why many settlers never move beyond denial and guilt, and why many public education efforts are ineffective in bringing about deep social and political change" (Regan, 2010, p. 23). Thus, for an effective decolonization project, it is imperative that as settlers we make ourselves the subject under closest examination (Regan, 2010).

For a truly decolonizing curriculum, then, the project must acknowledge that we as settlers cannot simply theorize about decolonizing: "we must experience it, beginning with ourselves as individuals, and then as morally and ethically responsible socio-political actors in Canadian society" (Regan, 2010, P. 23-24). As a teacher it is crucial to situate oneself not as an expert but as a learner. In this way, the teacher comes to know herself and to understand her own complicity in colonialism, and only then can she encourage her students to do the same (Regan, 2010). After I shared my settler story and some of the unsettling memories of my Nunavik teaching and graduate research experiences, I encouraged students to explore their own settler stories through creative writing assignments such as journaling, poetry, short story, and other forms of artistic expression such as collage, music and artwork. We discussed our feelings together in open and safe conversations, and learned from each other in ways that fostered

decolonizing perspectives. As my students were only thirteen and fourteen years old, I had to tread lightly to ensure that I did not unconsciously reinforce "benevolent imperialism and colonial attitudes" in my students "in ways that are antithetical to decolonization" (Regan, 2010, p. 23).

According to Regan (2010), transformative learning "involves experiencing a deep structural shift in the basic premises of thoughts, feelings, and actions. It is a shift of consciousness that dramatically alters our way of being in the world" (Regan, 2010, p. 52). While my students were young teens and the majority of them had not previously heard about the legacy of colonialism or Indigenous peoples, emotion helped begin their process of critical thinking. As we read the novel after having completed the introductory activities and projects, students began to develop critical inquiry, asking questions and initiating conversations that demonstrated a transformation of their perspectives towards a decolonizing and unsettling worldview (Regan, 2010). Thus, while the students initially expressed difficult emotions, they later harnessed those emotions to step outside of their comfort zones, which allowed them to participate in constructive dialogue centred around decolonization and the steps we could take as a class towards reconciliation (Regan, 2010).

Throughout the unit, I emphasized how I hoped this newfound knowledge would inspire a desire to act. In the words of Hannah Tooktoo, I hoped to encourage reconcili-action, that is, for "each of us to find our own ways to share this knowledge with others and to integrate it into our everyday … life" (Regan, 2010, p.55). I attempted to motivate my students to spread awareness and create positive change through the acts of sharing their knowledge and settler stories with friends and family. As Regan (2010) writes, these "seemingly small but empowering acts [may cause] a ripple effect as settlers speak up, challenging other settlers to rethink their views" (p. 55). With the knowledge we learned in listening to survival stories, sharing our settler stories, developing critical thinking, exploring creative and artistic forms of expression, and participating in open dialogue, we were able to re-story and re-write history, and contribute to an unsettled pedagogy and decolonizing curricula in our Grade 8 ELA 2018-2019 classroom. In these ways, my students became "better equipped to understand the complex genesis of contemporary Indigenous-settler conflicts and to share this information with others in ways that challenge ingrained attitudes and deepen understanding" (Regan, 2010, p. 55).

According to Cole and Knowles (2008), one of the "overarching purposes of arts-informed research, [is that] there must be an explicit intention for the research to reach communities and audiences including but beyond the academy" (p. 61). Through the various artistic expressions that the students and I explored in our *Indian Horse* novel unit, we were able to unsettle the prescribed ELA curriculum which was not only void of Indigenous perspectives, but we were able to inspire parents, other students and teachers to join the conversation. Thus, while Indigenous research conducted by non-Natives requires that the results are disseminated back to the people who have helped informed the research – and while I do plan to circulate the participant poems in Nunavik communities – the main subject of my research involved the participants and myself as settlers. For this reason, it was imperative for the participants of this study and for myself to find ways to incorporate the unsettling lessons we learned as a result of participating in this research in ways that would reach settler communities, and as teachers, this primarily involved our school communities. Because arts-based methodologies are more in line with Indigenous ways of knowing, thinking and doing, one way to decolonize the prescribed curriculum in our practices is through promoting artistic inquiry together with Indigenous perspectives in order to provoke self-reflection. By incorporating the arts into our decolonizing projects, we may be better able to spread awareness and contribute to reconciliation as arts-based inquiry,

> with its main goals of accessibility (and breadth of audience), is an attempt to acknowledge individuals in societies as knowledge makers engaged in the act of knowledge and advancement. Tied to moral purpose, it is also an explicit attempt to make a difference through research, not only in the lives of ordinary citizens, but also in the thinking and decisions of policymakers, politicians, legislators, and other key decision makers. (Cole & Knowles, 2008, p. 60)

While the above quote is directed towards arts-based research, it translates exactly to the goals of Indigenous research and the ways in which the participants and I attempted to contribute to reconciliation.

This research was a transformative inquiry for me in many ways. Doing research that matters requires following the path with heart (Chambers, 2004). In the act of performing ceremony through story-sharing, the participants expressed through poetry what we felt in our hearts and as such, we changed. We voiced our positions as Indigenous supporters and are now

committed to contributing to decolonizing acts towards reconciliation in various ways but especially within our school contexts. Not only did this research inspire my participants and myself to include Indigenous perspectives in our teaching, and given us the courage to become induvial advocates for change in our milieus, but my research inspired me to follow my heart and put my own words into action. In working towards active change in my own practice, in ways that I have previously been afraid or too shy to pursue, this research changed me in ways that gave me the confidence I needed to attempt to provoke change in a setting that was steeped in the language, history and customs of colonization. This research effected change not only in my self and my participants, but in the middle school where I was teaching, by inspiring colleagues and administrators to step up and contribute to a decolonizing literacy project.

As Regan (2010) writes, "speaking up is an act of truth telling" (p. 55). And though students may experience difficult emotions regarding the truth about our settler history, through critical reflection and artistic expression,

> students' emotions about the past can be brought into the present in order to shape and support their current ethical commitments … What we need to teach our students is not simply to remember, as if history were only a lesson in mnemonic devices, but that memory is an ongoing social activity, the very process of history-making itself, to which they are being called to contribute.(Regan, 2010, p. 77)

"Indigenous research *is* a life changing ceremony" (Wilson, 2008, p. 61). According to Wilson (2008), when presenting the results of the research,

> Something that should go into the writing is how you have changed and what the whole process has done to you. What you have become because of that. And did it change anyone else. It's important to talk about that too, if you feel that, or if somebody has said that it made a difference to them. (p.123)

Throughout this thesis I have discussed the many ways that I have changed as a result of my research. At the age of 18, I began my teacher education with the goal of reaching at least one student. Although I have received some letters of thanks throughout the years, I have never in my life been more moved than I was this summer when I opened my email and found the following

letter from one of the students in my Grade 8 ELA class in which I piloted the Native literacy project:[21]

> Hello Ms. Sanchez,
>
> I hope that you and your family have been well! I think I speak for the class when I say that we all missed you! The school year is over and we're hoping to see you again [next year]! You're a one-of-a kind teacher that we were all extremely blessed to have! Thank you for everything you did for us! I know that I will never forget you!
>
> I wanted to write to you to ask you for your opinion regarding an idea I would like to put forth to the Young Writers of Canada.
>
> What are your thoughts? Do you think it can work?
>
> I look forward to your response,
>
> [Name of Student]
>
> Dear [Editor],
>
> […]
>
> The reason why I am writing to you is because, this year, as part of our English Language Arts curriculum, we were introduced to Indigenous cultures. We learned how story telling plays a prominent role in Indigenous cultures, as Indigenous heritage is passed down through stories. Coupled with all the talk of a new statutory holiday whose purpose would be to celebrate Indigenous cultures, I experienced a "Eureka" moment. Why not create an anthology revolving around Indigenous cultures, written by Canadians, for Canadians? The purpose of such an anthology would be to raise awareness of our past wrongs, such as in the case of residential schools, create a more tolerant and responsible present, as we come together to celebrate our differences through stories, poems and art and give birth to an inclusive future, where all our voices matter.
>
> Essentially, what I am proposing is a Writing Contest without prizes, with a specific theme, open to all Canadians under the age of eighteen. The theme would include: Indigenous Peoples and cultures, residential schools, historical narrations related to Indigenous history, etc.… The Anthology would be published on the first Anniversary of Truth and Reconciliation Day. The Anthology could then be sold to schools to use as an educational aid as well as to the general public. Also, it would be wonderful if we could find a way to donate all profits from the sale of this Anthology to a cause supporting Indigenous communities. I think that by putting a voice to the past, we may contribute to the healing process. We can't undo the past, but through words and stories, we can create a brighter and more inclusive future!

[21] The letter has been included with the student's and his parents' permission, however, I have removed all identifying information for anonymity.

> I realize that it's a big undertaking but I am hoping that you will be able to help make this endeavour possible. I am willing to help out in whatever way I can. I am looking forward to the possibility of working with you on this Anthology. I copied Ms. Sanchez on this email, as she is a wonderful resource person. She has completed her Masters on Indigenous peoples and cultures and is currently working on her Phd. I am actually in the process of reading her [master's] thesis - it's incredibly amazing so far.
>
> Thank you in advance for taking the time to read and consider my proposal, as a brighter future begins with a mere few words… After all, the pen is mightier than the sword!
>
> Please note that I will be away at camp between the 7th and the 28th of July 2019. If you write to me during this time, I will be unable to respond; however, I promise to reply upon my return.
>
> Thank you and I look forward to your response. Wishing everyone at Young Writers of Canada a summer filled with an abundance of sunshine, good cheer and beautiful memories,
>
> [Name of Student] (Personal communication, July 5, 2009.)

When I was 18, I never would have imagined it possible that I could inspire a fourteen year old boy on his summer vacation to take such an active, profound, and deeply touching step towards reconciliation, but my heart soars to know that somewhere along the way, I have done something right. Little did I know when I was sitting in my first grade story-telling circle that my heart had already begun carving out a path. Little did I know, that it would involve story, and that through story I could make other hearts come alive. Little did I know that Spirit had been helping me along the way.

Leave Taking

Since I was a little girl, stories have had a special place in my heart. They are my safe haven. They allow me to dream. They allow me to escape, to travel, to learn and explore. Stories ignite my curiosity and spark endless questions. They fire my creativity. Little did I know, that Spirit has been communicating with me through story.

Spirit speaks to me through stories. It whispers into my dreams and wakes me up at night. I feel it when I teach, it's electric energy pulsing passionately through my body, heart and mind as I attempt to reach others through story. It flows through me when I read, as a wave of emotion that overcomes me when another heart touches mine, or when I write, as I attempt to touch other

hearts with the power of words. It sings to me in mesmerizing melodies when I hear music and voices, harmonizing together to beat as one holistic entity. It presents itself when I stop and watch the leaves dance on trees and hear the hush and sigh of the wind breathing through them; through me. I recall crying as a child when the leaves fell to the ground every autumn, leaving the branches sparse and cold. I have been searching my whole life to understand why I watch them in fascination. I remember as I grew older being perplexed by the sadness I felt (and still feel) for the lonely trees that continue to make my eyes tear and throat swell. In the autumn of my own life, I am beginning to understand why. I sense it in the trembling of the ground underneath me during thunder storms, and in the electric current of lightening that flashes in and out of me leaving me stunned. It penetrates me when rain drops, melting into my skin. I welcome it through the warmth of the sun's playful rays that tickle their way into my heart full of radiating love. I listen to it in signs, believe in it through omens, and look for it as I search to make meaning in coincidences, repetitions, dualities, similarities, differences, symbols, and patterns. I find it in wordplay. Everything happens for a reason. "The path was written in omens, and there was no way I could go wrong" (Coelho, 1998, p. 165).

As a child I was often accused of being overly sensitive. This has followed me into every sphere of my adult life. Through this research I have come to acknowledge and be thankful for my sensitivity, as it allows me to feel and know in ways that others may not. It allows me to connect to all things, and undergoing this inquiry has helped me realize and understand the fact that all through my life, whether I knew it or not, I have been feeling, watching, listening, and welcoming Spirit. In these ways I form relationships spiritually, and communicate spirituality in all of my relations, past, present and future.

Spirit came to me one night as I was watering the garden and "stopped me in my tracks" (S. Deer, 2020, p. 19). There is an *inukshuk* statue in my yard and I see it every day, but without this research, I would not have heard it. From the moment I placed it in my yard, I have been trying to steady it. That night the crooked *inukshuk* spoke to me; it had been patiently waiting for me to listen; it is balanced because of its unsteadiness rather than despite it (Prendergast and Leggo, 2007). I hope to find other encounters with spirit, and I pray, dear reader, that you do as well. I have found home. In my journey of becoming, I will continue to explore other versions of home in my life-long search for knowledge. And though I may have more questions than when I began, I know that the search will always lead me down the path with heart.

My story began by looking into the window of my past. Throughout this journey I have learned that I am no longer stuck in that window nor longing to find another view. Instead, I have learned to open the window and let the breeze from the past waft into the present towards the future. I have realized that my path home lies in the gaps, holes and spaces of a solid *inukshuk* on unsettling ground, an *inukshuk* that shifts and transforms as I learn and grow. I again turn to the power of words and poetry to help capture the picture.

The View from the Window

Like a painting it is set before one,
But less brittle, ageless; these colours
Are renewed daily with variations
Of light and distance that no painter
Achieves or suggests. Then there is movement,
Change, as slowly the cloud bruises
Are healed by sunlight, or snow caps
A black mood; but gold at evening
To cheer the heart. All through history
The great brush has not rested,
Nor the paint dried; yet what eye,
Looking coolly, or, as we now,
through the tears' lenses, ever saw
This work and it was not finished?
-R.S. Thomas

The Crooked *Inukshuk* in my Yard

My journey down the path with heart began with story. I offer one final idea to ponder, dear reader, and I hope you take it with you on your own journey as you wander down the path with heart.

> All that we are is story. From the moment we are born to the time we continue on our spirit journey, we are involved in the creation of the story of our time here. It is what we arrive with. It is all we leave behind. We are not the things we accumulate. We are not the things we deem important. We are story. All of us. What comes to matter then is the creation of the best possible story we can while we're here; you, me, us, together. When we can do that and we take the time to share those stories with each other, we get bigger inside, we see each other, we recognize our kinship – we change the world, one story at a time. – Richard Wagamese

And now our minds have come full circle… \0/

Ne’e non:wa enska entitewahwe’nón:ni ne onkwa’nikon:ra: \0/

Appendix A

Integrated Studies in Education
Faculty of Education
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Participant Consent Form

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Dear Participant,

I am a Doctoral Candidate in Educational Studies in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education at McGill University, under the Supervision of Associate Professor Dr. Teresa-Strong Wilson. The study I am conducting for my doctoral research is entitled **Finding Poetry: a collaborative self-study of teachers' memories, experiences and stories in Northern Quebec Inuit Communities**. For my study, I hope to bring together a small number of teachers who have previously taught in Nunavik, to determine how our Northern teaching experience continues to influence and impact our current teaching practices in the South.

Purpose of the Study:

I have lived and taught in Nunavik, the arctic region of Quebec, for four years. I have been home now in Southern Quebec for six years, and am still readjusting to my own city, culture and society. As I continue the teaching career here that I began there, I feel more and more the need to understand these juxtapositions of past and present. Constantly lapsing in and out of these temporal and spatial worlds, I yearn to make sense of the impacts that the experience of teaching in the North, has and will continue to have, on my current teaching practice in Southern Quebec. When teaching in Nunavik, Northern teacher colleagues and I often discussed how the Quebec Education Program did not accurately address or reflect the culture, goals, and needs of the Inuit people. As such, my doctoral thesis will attempt to answer these questions: **how has teaching in**

Inuit communities influenced the 'post'-identities and teaching practices of white teachers who 'go North'? What methods/skills and pedagogical lessons have the teachers learned in the North, and how do these influence and contribute to their current teaching practices in the South?

As my proposed research requires the participants to delve into the past, I predict that nostalgia will play a large role in determining the participants' current feelings and thoughts associated with the Northern teaching experience, and how these continue to preoccupy the participants in the present. Nostalgia has a deep effect in my daily life, and therefore impacts my teaching in a significant way – one which requires further examination in order to determine if this is a phenomenon also experienced by my participants, and if so, to what degree remembering influences our practices (Atia & Davies, 2010; Boyme, 2001).

Procedure:

I initially contacted you individually as a potential participant for my study, in order to determine if you were interested, willing and available to participate. We discussed the study freely, and you were given the opportunity to pose any questions/concerns regarding the study and your participation in it. Because you have demonstrated an interest and availability to participate, I am now formally presenting you with the official details and process of the study.

To summarize, **your participation** will entail:

1) Attending and participating in three group discussions of a length from three to four hours each;
2) Bringing three to four photographs which you feel are a significant representation of your teaching experience in the North (to be used as a prompt for discussion and writing;
3) Writing a first and second draft of your teacher story/memory text (with my guidance);
4) Deconstructing and analyzing the memory texts in a group discussion (with my guidance) and with questions previously agreed upon by the group;
5) Creating word columns from the memory texts to generate found poetry (with my guidance);
6) To write a found poem using the words in your word columns (with my guidance);
7) To discuss the poems and share our thoughts and feelings about how these poems present a "picture" of our experiences teaching in the North, and what we have learned from a) the Northern teaching experience; b) how the experience informs our current teaching practices; and c) what we have learned from the collaborative self-study involving memory work, narrative and poetic inquiry as a whole.

*N.B. *Please note that all writing will be done during the discussions and will not take up any of your personal time.*

The table below briefly depicts the steps and time-line of the study:

OVERVIEW OF INQUIRY PROCESS

Timeline	Steps
Day 1	1. Sharing and discussing photographs 2. Generating of questions for memory text analysis 3. Writing of memory text (draft 1) 4. Sharing of texts and answering questions 5. Memory work using photographs 6. Re-writing of memory text (draft 2)
Day 2	1. Sharing of revised memory text (draft 2) and answering questions 2. Creation of word column 1 (with words from memory text 2) 3. Creation of word columns 2 (without words from memory text 2) 4. Creation of poem (with words from word columns 1 and 2)
Day 3	1. Sharing of poems 2. Discussion about poems including similarities, differences, omissions 3. Discussion about how the poems represent a picture of our teaching experience in the North; what we have learned from the experience; how it influences our current teaching practices, and what we have learned from the collaborative self-study via memory work, narrative, and poetic inquiry as a whole

Confidentiality:

There are no anticipated risks to you by participating in this study. Privacy and confidentiality are also not an issue in this study, as the participants and myself are colleagues. We know each other well as we have shared the experiences of teaching in the North together. The confidentiality of all discussions will be ensured by hosting the discussions in the privacy of my home rather than a public setting, in order to ensure a welcoming environment conducive to honest and active participation. Participants' names in the study will be kept anonymous through the use of pseudonyms. Any identifying pieces of information, will be eliminated, as will any identifying information regarding any of the subjects that may arise in the texts and discussions.

If a participant wishes to withdraw from the study, or is no longer able to continue, the written data will be returned to the participant unless given permission otherwise. The option to destroy the data will be offered and decided upon at the participant's discretion. Please note, however, that the contribution to the discussions will be kept on the audio-recording and transcript and may be used for analysis. Before publication, participants will be given the opportunity to read the parts of the dissertation that concerns their data before it is published, in order to ensure accuracy and consent.

The hard data (the original – or copies if participants wish to keep the original – memory texts, word columns and poems) will be stored in a special file cabinet in my home, secured by lock

and key. The group meetings will be audio-recorded with your permission and transcribed by myself, ensuring that our discussions are not heard by an external source. Soft data such as computer files and audio-recordings will be stored on my personal computer and require a password to be accessed. There will be no use of the data by anyone other than myself, and the only other person who may see the data will be my Supervisor, in order to guide my analysis. I will keep the data for the required time that the McGill Ethics Board stipulates, and for as long as I require to write any articles for academic journals, scholarly papers or presentations about this study.

Expected Value or Benefits of Participating in my Research:

Please note that your participation in this study is voluntary, and that there is no financial compensation. You may refuse to participate in parts of the study, decline to answer any question, and may withdraw from the study at any time.

There is much to be gained from this study on both a personal and professional level; you will be exploring your past and determining how it influences you in the present. You will discover the impacts and influences of the Northern teaching experience on your current post-Northern teaching practice; examine these influences in order to determine what was gained from the experience, and how it translates to present teaching methods, knowledge, styles and skills; gain professional improvement from the self-study; gain personal insights and new understanding of our Northern teaching experience; acknowledge our pre and post Northern teacher identities; predict how the experience can impact future Norther teachers, and identify strategies for collaboration in designing culturally appropriate curriculum for Northern students.

The results of this study will be disseminated through the thesis portion of my Doctoral work, the presentation of my dissertation at my oral defense, as well as at educational conferences, and possibly in academic journals, and/or any by-products in other publications and/or presentations.

I thank you very much for taking an interest in helping me with my doctoral research. If you would like to participate, please fill out the form, sign it, and return to me. You may keep a copy for your records.

I look forward to collaborating, sharing, remembering, and learning with you.

Sincerely,

Kimberley Sanchez-Soares

If you have any further questions about any aspects of the study, I invite you to contact me by phone at 514-690-2640 or by email at kimberley.sanchez-soares@mail.mcgill.ca. You may also contact Dr. Strong-Wilson at teresa.strong-wilson@mcgill.ca or at 514-398-4527 Ext. 094014. If you have any questions regarding your rights and welfare as a participant, please contact McGill Ethics Officer Lynda McNeil at 514-398-6831 or lynda.mcneil@mcgill.ca.

With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study entitled **Finding Poetry: a collaborative self-study of teachers' memories, experiences and stories in Northern Quebec Inuit Communities**. By signing below, I am agreeing to take part in this study as described.

I further agree:

A) To be audio-recorded; yes____ no____

B) To permit the data collected to be used in future related studies; yes____ no____

C) To permit the publication of audio-recordings as part of this research; yes____ no____

D) To permit the publication of photographs as part of this research; yes____ no____

E) To permit the publication of poems as a part of this research; yes____ no____

Please sign below if you have read the above information and consent to participate in this study. Agreeing to participate in this study does not waive any of your rights or release the researchers from their responsibilities. A copy of this consent form will be given to you and the researcher will keep a copy.

Participant's Name (please print): _____

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix B

Protocol for Writing Memory Texts

from Mitchell, C. & Weber, S. (2014). *Reinventing Ourselves as Teachers: Beyond Nostalgia*. London: Falmer Press. (p. 57.)

According to Haug (2000), writing memories as stories will allow for textual analysis of the memory, rather psychological analysis of the person. To deconstruct the memories properly, Haug (2000) and Clare and Johnson (2000) suggest that **the texts be written in the third person with as much detail as possible to avoid censorship. The texts should also be written with some speed, preferably within an hour, to reduce the opportunities of self-editing**, "making the contradictions of everyday life more available for analysis" (Clare & Johnson, 2000, p. 198). **When writing your memory texts, please follow these steps accordingly:**

1. Focus on a particular example of or incident surrounding the object of experience: describe specific events, an adventure, a particular moment.

2. Describe the experience from the inside, as it were; almost like a state of mind: the feelings, the mood, the emotions, etc.

3. Describe the experience as you live(d) through it. Avoid causal explanations and generalizations. For example, this is not the place to state what caused your illness, why you like swimming so much, or why you feel that children tend to like to play outdoors more than indoors.

4. Try to focus on an example of an experience which stands out for its vividness, or because it was the first time.

5. Attend to how the body feels, how things smell(ed), how they sound(ed), etc.

6. Avoid trying to beautify your account with fancy phrases or flowery terminology.

Appendix C

Questions for Analyzing Memory Texts

from Mitchell, C. & Weber, S. (2014). *Reinventing Ourselves as Teachers: Beyond Nostalgia*. London: Falmer Press. (p. 63)

These questions are to be used as a guideline for analyzing and deconstructing our memory texts. Reading, sharing and discussing each of the participants' texts will allow for different perspectives, new insights and knowledge to emerge. The questions are to be generated, accepted, rejected, altered and extended by the participants to encourage the fostering of trust and collectivity among the group (Haug, 2000; Clare & Johnson, 2000). **Please edit the questions accordingly, and note your responses to the questions in the spaces provided.**

1. Are there ambiguities?

2. What clichés are used? Why?

3. What's missing from these memories?

4. What are the commonalities? How does the group account for anomalies?

5. How do these memories run ‘against the grain’ of the expected?

6. What symbolic language is used? What does it seem to symbolize?

7. What concrete links can be made to a teaching episode now?

Additional questions/notes:

Appendix D

Protocol for Using Photographs as Memory Prompts

from Mitchell, C. & Reid-Walsh, J. (2002). Memory spaces: exploring the afterlife of children's popular culture. In *Researching children's popular culture: the cultural spaces of childhood*. New York: Routledge. (p.68-69)

Hampl's (1999) method of **nostalgia as productive remembering is organized around revision**. Without revision or re-vision of a memory or written memory, one cannot see the symbols in the details which will reveal the true subject of the memory.

The methods for nostalgia and memory work are based on a first draft/second draft approach. In the first draft, the photograph can serve as a prompt, but in the second draft, the photograph can provide corrections (Mitchell and Reid-Walsh, 2002). Hampl (1999) describes how the first draft of memoir writing is always filled with inconsistencies, lies, questions, and gaps in the knowledge and memory of the writer. It is these inconsistencies which demand a revision of the draft, in order to seek out the truth. Thus, the next step to locating the truth is a second draft, a true revision, not simply with flowery editing of the first, but deliberate elimination of lies, and extensive analysis of symbols, to discover the true subject of the memoir. The photograph is therefore an important and reliable method for memory work, and Mitchell and Reid-Walsh (2002) have outlined a protocol for its use.

Before writing the second draft of your memory text, please review your photographs for a second time, and record your answers to the following questions in the spaces below:

1. Consider the human subject(s) of the photograph. Start with a simple description, and then move into an account in which you can take up the position of the subject. In this part of the exercise, it is helpful to use the third person ("she" rather than "I" for instance). To bring out the feelings associated with the photograph, you may visualize yourself as the subject as she was at that moment, in the picture; this can be done in turn with all of the photograph's human subjects, if there is more than one and even with inanimate objects in the picture.

2. Consider the picture's context of production. Where, when, how, by whom and why was the photograph taken?

3. Consider the context in which an image of this sort would have been made. What photographic technologies were used? What are the aesthetics of the image? Does it conform with certain photographic images?

4. Consider the photograph's currency in its context or contexts of reception. Who or what was the photograph made for? Who has it now, and where has it been kept? Who saw it then and who sees it now?

Appendix E: English Translations of French Poems

Melissa's Poem	Nathalie's Poem	Sara's Poem	Found Poem
Whirlwinds *It is possible to survive* *the threat.* *She was able to record* *the beauty of the void.* *Crying feels good* *in this vast world.* *Advancing, backing up,* *dreaming, is part of the* *process.* *Change can be* *scary.* *It's important to* *photograph everything,* *the houses, the mountains,* *the faces, the animals.* *White, cold, until infinity.* *When she feels sadness,* *she remembers her family* *and friends.* *Imagining the worst,* *hoping for luck,* *living what's real.* *After some time,* *being convinced of having* *found her tiny bit of* *paradise* *with both feet on the* *ground.*	*Poem* *Feeling the need* *to experience an* *adventure.* *Wanting to teach,* *being able to leave,* *moving, observing,* *storing and analysing.* *Knowing that it will be a* *difficult experience.* *Separating, sharing the* *stress and expressing her* *emotions. Waiting. D-* *Day.* *Worry and impatience.* *Watching Montreal get* *farther, her family.* *Seeming strong,* *Feeling shaken.* *Jumping in the plane.* *Direction* *accomplishment.* *Asking herself, doubting,* *being strong, being* *proud. Day 1* *The Inuit her new foster* *family. Worry.* *Receiving her belongings,* *settling in.* *Next event: school. Hard* *to swallow.* *Teaching, eating, having* *fun. Repeat. Delicious.* *Planning to leave.* *Holding in her* *discomfort.* *Taking control and* *repeating the adventure.* *Teaching, eating, having* *fun. Limit.* *Short intrusion. The* *students, the Inuit, us the* *whites. Banal.* *Holding back her* *emotions, looking, storing* *and* *leaving.* *Montreal. Teaching,* *eating, having fun.* *Looking at the past,* *remembering,* *never forgetting.*	*Will I Know?* *Will I know how to* *Listen to the sound* *Understand the silence* *Hear the words* *Like a song* *Open my eyes* *To look* *To see* *Will I know how to* *Live the house* *Inhabit the streets* *Walk the land* *Feel* *Enter without making a* *sound* *Wait for* *The door that opens* *The hand that reaches* *out* *The syllable* *In the form of a* *greeting* *Build* *Weave* *Create* *At every second of* *presence* *The smile that touches* *Pray* *Finally for communion*	*Snap Shot* *White, cold until infinity* *Quiet* *Listening to silence* *Change* *Advancing, backing up,* *dreaming* *Unmasked* *Opening the eyes* *Revealing* *The smile that touches* *Cross cultural* *Remembering, never* *forgetting* *Love.*

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